

VIEW of JELÀLABÀD from the SOUTH

London Richard Bentley New Burlington Street, 1842

NARRATIVE

OF VARIOUS JOURNEYS

IN

BALOCHISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, AND THE PANJAB;

INCLUDING A RESIDENCE IN THOSE COUNTRIES FROM 1826 TO 1838.

BY CHARLES MASSON, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

It is hoped that the melancholy interest conferred by events upon the countries bordering on the Indus, may justify the publication of these Volumes.

Should the information afforded increase the stock of knowledge already possessed, my labours may prove neither ill-timed nor unprofitable. Accounts of several of the journeys, &c., performed prior to 1831, differing in no essential manner from those now given, found their way to the government-offices both in India and England. In the course of the work I have expressed regret that this should have been the case, but only under the apprehension that they may have been made to subserve the interested schemes of artful and designing men,—a purpose for which most certainly they were never written.

The late Sir Alexander Burnes, in a letter of 9th March, 1836, wrote to me:—"For some years past I have often crossed your path and I have never done so without finding the impressions which I had imbibed regarding your talents, your honour, and your zeal strengthened." I quote this passage

merely to show that while Sir Alexander could privately acknowledge that he had "often crossed my path, &c.," he found it inconvenient as regarded his pretensions publicly to avow so much; and I am in possession of a letter from England, informing me that my papers were considered valuable at the India House, as "corroborating the accuracy of Captain Burnes' statements." It will be seen that I was guiltless of the wild projects which would seem from the first to have possessed the mind of that unfortunate officer, and which he was mainly instrumental in forcing the Government to attempt, however notoriously the results have been disastrous to it and fatal to himself.

In the concluding chapters of the third volume, I have slightly noticed the commercial mission of Captain Burnes in 1837-38. I have, perhaps, said enough to convey an idea of it; it would have been painful to have said more. The late Dr. Lord was commissioned by Lord Auckland to write a history of it. To have glossed over so flagrant a failure probably exceeded his ability, and the task undertaken with temerity was abandoned in despair.

I have also alluded to the honour done me by Sir John Hobhouse in enrolling me amongst the defenders of Lord Auckland's policy. In declining the honour, I trust I have, although briefly, still sufficiently, shown that I am not entitled to it. I wrote the few remarks I made on this subject with

the speech of Sir John, as it appeared in the "Times," before me. I have now the published speech, which from the very circumstance of its being published, I presume the ex-minister to be proud of. In the "Times" I am quoted as having written: "In the recent efforts of Shâh Sújah there is little doubt but that if a single British officer had gone with him, as a mere reporter of his proceedings to the Governor-general, his simple appearance would have sufficed for the Shâh's re-establishment." There is no doubt that these observations were made by me in 1835 or 1836 on some occasion, and that they could not have been imagined by the "Times" reporter; therefore it may be supposed they were quoted by Sir John Hobhouse, although they are omitted in the published version of the speech.

It was the general opinion in Kâbal that if a *single* British officer had accompanied the Shâh in 1834, that he would have been successful—and I could understand that there was truth in it. A *single* British officer might have done as much in 1838; and I question whether, if Sir Alexander Burnes had been entrusted with the Shâh's restoration, he would have been accompanied with more than the regiment or two which he considered necessary; but when Mr. Secretary Macnaghten became inspired by the desire to acquire renown and to luxuriate in Kâbal, the extensive armament was decided upon, which was utterly unnecessary, and which has conduced to the subsequent mischief as

much as the incapacity of those directing it—for in the hands of abler men it might have also proved a fatal experiment.

I may here controvert the opinion many entertain that Shâh Sújah was unpopular with his Afghâns. His career proves that he was not. Repeatedly, with scanty funds and resources, he has been able to collect thousands around him, and, although from his irresolution generally unsuccessful, he never lost this power until the British destroyed it for him. In the misfortunes the remembrance of which still excites our horror, there was no one more to be pitied than the Shâh, for no man could be placed in a more critical or compromised situation. Before leaving Ferozpúr, he remarked that he was conscious that he should acquire a "badnâm," a bad name for ever, but that he should again see Kâbal. There was no reason that the exiled prince should have lost his reputation. A *single* British officer, or even a regiment or two might not have injured it. The envoy and minister and his host ruined it. The Afghâns had no objections to the match, they disliked the manner of wooing.

Even after the entry of the Shâh into Kâbal, had the army retired agreeably to the Simla proclamation, he might still have reigned there; but this did not consist with the views of the government from that time revealed.—It was found requisite to remain in order to keep him on the

throne. Had he dared, he would have deprecated such aid.

Misfortune naturally excites compassion, and this has been shown to Dost Máhomed Khân, who, strangely enough, in opposition to the Shâh has been supposed to have been popular—yet he was not. Abandoned by his army at Arghandí, he became without a struggle a fugitive. When it was found that the British troops did not retire, and dissatisfaction as the consequence spread amongst the people of the country, he sought to profit by it, and presented himself at Bamíân—for what? to be repulsed and then deserted by his allies. Again he showed himself in the Kohistân, but only to surrender.

In Sir John Hobhouse's published speech my opinions are cited as brought forward by Sir Claude Wade. I believe it would be impossible for the latter individual to act in a straightforward manner. He might otherwise have stated that such opinions were given in 1835 or 1836, and might not be applicable to the state of things in 1838. However, Sir John Hobhouse was in possession of my own recommendation, written in reply to Mr. Secretary Macnaghten, that Shâh Sujah should be restored, but he forbore to notice it, because, perhaps, there was no allusion to the designs of Persia and Russia therein, and that the restoration was urged for the purpose of *sparing expense and loss of life,* not of occasioning both the one and the other.

In my remarks on the mission of Captain Burnes, I have endeavoured to show that the primary cause of its failure, was the neglect of the Pesháwer question. I never had but one opinion on that subject. In Mr. Baillie's speech of the 23rd of June, I was surprised to observe quoted a despatch from Captain Burnes to Mr. Macnaghten, written only the day before the mission left Kâbal, and which I introduce here, because, while aware of the interview alluded to, I never knew what passed at it, more than that Captain Burnes himself told me he had rejected every proposal made to him. It also amply proves the correctness of my views, and establishes I should think, pretty clearly, both how easily our affairs in Kâbal might have been arranged, and how grossly Captain Burnes suffered himself to be imposed upon from the very first — while it explains the meaning of all the various stratagems put into play to " rouse the mind of Sikander Burnes."

" On the 25th I received another visit from Sirdár Meher Dil Khân who was accompanied by the Nawâb Jabár Khân, Mírza Samee Khân, and the Naibs of Candahar and Câbul ; the deputation was a formal one from both branches of the family. The Sirdar now informed me that *the ameer had agreed to dismiss Captain Vicovitch — to hold no further communication with other powers — and to write to the Shâh of Persia, that he had done with his Majesty for ever.* The sirdárs of Candahar on their part agreed *to address the shâh, recal Ullahdad, the*

agent who had accompanied Kambar Alí, and to place themselves along with their brother, the ameer, entirely under the protection of the British Government; in return for which they claimed at its hand two things, — first, a direct promise of its good offices to *establish peace at Pesháwer, and an amelioration in the condition of Súltân Máhomed Khân*; and second, a promise equally direct to *afford them protection from Persia in whatever way the British judged it best for their interests, it being clearly understood that Candahar was not to be allowed to suffer injury*."

I can easily imagine that Captain Burnes would conceal from me, on many accounts, the proposals made at this interview; for assuredly had I been aware of them, and that even at the last hour the chiefs had returned to their senses, I might have been spared the disagreeable task of recommending their deposition, under the impression that they obstinately declined any arrangement. The Bárak Zai chiefs have suffered from the errors of Captain Burnes as much as from their own. What Captain Burnes gained we all know.

It is to be hoped that the good sense of the British nation will never again permit such expeditions as the one beyond the Indus, to be concerted with levity, and to be conducted with recklessness; and that the experience acquired from disasters, may be made beneficial in placing the control of Indian affairs in very different hands from those who have so wilfully abused the power

confided to them, and whose rashness and folly in plunging the country into wars ruinous to its reputation may yet be punished.

The security and prosperity of the Indian possessions are too intimately connected with those of Great Britain, to permit that a minister or ministers of the crown, or a Governor-general, shall again endanger them, or be permitted the power of making aggressive wars on trivial or imaginary pretences, and such wars without the consent of the Houses of Parliament, the sanction of the Privy Council, and, for aught we know, without the knowledge of the sovereign of the realm. If such irregularities pass unnoticed the nation will deserve the misfortunes she may entail upon herself, and will cease to be free.

There is much general information on Afghânistân and its inhabitants, which I could not introduce into the present work, although I may at a future time strive to repair this deficiency. Lamenting to a friend that my contracted space obliged me to omit much that I should have been pleased to have noticed, he said, " I hope you have told us who the Afghâns are." I had not done so, yet the question was so pertinent, that I avail myself of the Preface to answer it imperfectly.

The term Afghân, acknowledged by a multitude of tribes speaking the same dialect,—the Pashto or Afghâni,—has no known signification, and is mani-

festly borne by many people of very different origin. There are, however, several marked divisions, such as the Dúránís, the Ghiljís, the Jájís and Túrís; the Yusef Zai tribes, the Khaibarís, the Vazírís, with the tribes of the Súlímân range, &c. Amongst these races it is difficult to tell to whom the appellation of Afghân originally belonged. As regards their origin, we may have recourse to the various traditions preserved by themselves, or by the historians who have mentioned them, as well as to other circumstances.

The Dúránís are known both in India and Persia as the Abdállí or Avdâllí, (a plural term,) and when we find that the white Huns of ancient history, the Euthalites of classical authors, were named Hepthäls, by Armenian authors, we might infer that the Abdállí or modern Dúránís, are no other than descendants of that powerful people. The Síáposh Kâfrs remember that their ancestors were driven into their hills from the plains by the Odâls,—a term they still apply to the inhabitants of the low countries.

The Ghiljís are undoubtedly a Túrkí tribe, the Khaljí or Khalají of Sherífadín, and other eastern authors.

Ferishta notes a tradition that the Afghâns were descendants of the Copts of Pharaoh's army. It is singular that the Jájís are called in the histories of Taimúr, Kâpt Jájí, seeming to intimate that to

them referred the tradition; it is equally certain that they have precisely the same cast of countenance as the Copt inhabitants of Cairo.

Another tradition describes the Afghâns as descendants of Jews, who accompanied the army of Walid, the general of the Caliphs. This would apply possibly to the Khaibar tribes, who reside in a locality to which they have given the name of a strong-hold or position in Arabia, and who wear locks of hair in a certain manner common to oriental Jews, so that one of the latter on seeing them unhesitatingly pronounces them to be of his stock.

Amongst the Yusef Zai tribes, there are many who may be affirmed, almost with certainty, to be akin to the Rájpút tribes of India, and like them, therefore, descended from the Getic, invaders of this part of the world, the subverters of the Greek Bactrian monarchy.

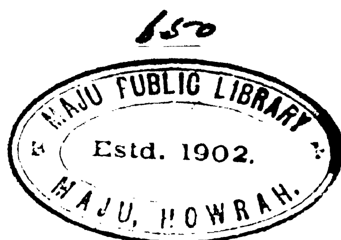
The Vazírís and other mountain-tribes occupying the Súlimân-range or Khaisa-ghar are in the position asserted by very general belief to be the seat of the genuine Afghân races,—true is it that they are found where the Máhomedan inroads first brought the name to notice, and their claims to be considered as the genuine Afghâns are, perhaps, better than those of any other tribes.

The introduction of the Máhomedan faith, with the legends and traditions of that religion, has induced all the Afghâns to pretend to a descent from

the Jewish patriarchs and Kings,—a pedigree, however, only due to their vanity, and which does not require to be too seriously examined.

In another sense they affirm that they are all Ben Israel, or children of Israel, which merely means that they are not heathens; for they affirm Christians, although not acknowledging their prophet, and Shiás whom they revile as heretics, to be equally with themselves Ben Israel, although they exclude Híndús, Chinese, and all idolaters.

London,
1st August, 1842.



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WOOD CUTS.

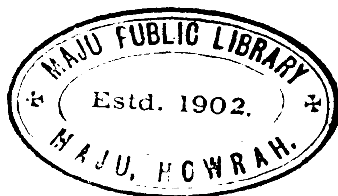
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WOOD CUTS.

SYSTEM OF ORTHOGRAPHY EMPLOYED.

a	a, as in above, abode, &c.
á	a, as in flat, mat, &c.
â	a, as in fall, hall, &c.
e	e, as in met, set, &c.
é	a, as in mate, fate, &c.
i	i, as in fir, sir, &c.
í	ee, as in meet, feet, &c.
o	o, as in open, over, &c.
ú	oo, as in poor, boor, &c.
ai	i, as in bite, mite, &c.

The consonants have the sounds they ordinarily express in English.



JOURNEYS

IN

BALOCHISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, AND THE PANJAB.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at Bahâwalpúr.—Agreeable transition.—The khân's wish to see me —Khân Máhomed.—His conversations.—Suspected to be an elchí.—Start for Ahmedpúr.—Country between Bahâwalpúr and Ahmedpúr.—Arrive at Ahmedpúr.—The Bakhshí Máhomed Khân.—Treated as a public guest.—Ráhmat Khân.—His history. — The khân visits Ahmedpúr and returns to Daráwal. — The Bakhshí and his levées.—Invited to take service.—Seized with fever. — The khân's physicians. — Departure for Allahabád. — Vární.—Appearance of Allahabád. —The khân's hunting pavilions.—Fortunate encounter.—Physicians of Allahabád and their remedies.—The fever leaves.—Salám Khân —Return to Ahmedpúr. — The Bakhshí opposes an interview with the khân. — Refused admittance to the khân's palace. — Humane act of Mútí Rám. — Chance meeting with the khân. — Interview with the Bakhshí, and offer of military service. — Audience of the khân. —Present of money.—Permission to depart.

In the autumn of 1826, having traversed the Rájpút States of Shekhawâtí, and the kingdom of Bikkanír, I entered the desert frontiers of the

khân of Bahâwalpúr; and passing successively the towns and castles of Púlarah, Míhr Ghar, Jám Ghar, Marút, and Moz Ghar, arrived at the city of Bahâwalpúr.

Although in crossing Rájpútána I had met with no obstacles beyond what were presented by the country itself, and its sultry climate, they were so considerable that notwithstanding I had been everywhere civilly received and kindly treated, I was delighted to leave behind arid sandy wastes, and to find myself in a large populous city, surrounded with luxuriantly cultivated fields, and groves of stately palm-trees. As Bahâwalpúr is seated on the skirts of the desert, the transition from a land of sterility and solitude to one of fertility and abundance is very striking to the traveller approaching it from the east, and to myself was particularly agreeable, from my purpose of enjoying within its precincts, the indulgence of a little repose, which I felt to be warrantable after the toils of the journey I had surmounted.

I found, however, that the arrival of a Feringhí, or European, within the khân's territory had been notified by the governor of Púlarah, and it was wished that I should proceed to Ahmedpúr, that the khân might have an interview with me, as it seemed his curiosity had been so far excited that he had expressed a desire to see me.

At Bahâwalpúr I was the guest of one Khân Máhomed, a man high in authority, if not the

governor of the place; and in one or two conversations I held with him he acquitted himself very fairly, his themes being politics, medicine, the philosopher's stone, and religion—fashionable topics with great and learned men in the East. I was astonished at some of his questions about Russia, and other European powers, but less so at some curious notions he entertained as to the nature of the Company Sáhib, having previously heard from Salim Singh, an officer of the Bikkanír Rájáh, that the Company Sáhib was a very good old lady, for whom he had a great respect. But the forte of Khân Máhomed was medicine,—and the large quantity of glass bottles ranged around his apartment, and filled with variously coloured liquids, evinced, if not his proficiency as a physician, some little dexterity as a compounder.

He was very anxious to know my business, and could hardly believe that I had none, or that I had not brought some message to the khân, to whom he loyally expressed the devotion of a slave. I had frequently before been suspected to be an elchí, or ambassador, and it was in vain I appealed to the negative evidences of my poverty, and my trudging alone, and on foot. Europeans were considered incomprehensible beings, and the inconveniences I bore from necessity were imputed to choice, or to " ikhmat," or ingenuity.

I passed three or four days at Bahâwalpúr, which gave me the opportunity of inspecting some of the

manufactures of silk and tissue, for which the city is famed, and of making the acquaintance of Nizámadín, the Kází, a worthy man, who more than once invited me to his residence. I then signified to Khân Máhomed that I was ready to start for Ahmedpúr; and he commissioned one of his dependents to accompany me, and to conduct me to the house of Máhomed Khân, the bakhshí, or paymaster of the khân's forces.

The distance between Bahâwalpúr and Ahmedpúr is about twenty cosses, or thirty miles; and we made two journeys, passing the night at Bakhshí Khân ka Masjít, a small village, so called from a comparatively handsome mosque, built by an individual whose name it bears. The heat of the weather was oppressive, but the country was well cultivated and peopled—the villages being usually distinguished by contiguous groups of tamarisk trees, which attain a surprising size. Water everywhere abounded, in wells of slight depth, and is raised to the surface by the medium of wheels, worked by oxen, and sometimes by camels. On one occasion we crossed a nullah or water-course, which I have reason to remember, as the camel I was riding lost his footing, and precipitated me into it; an accident more than compensated by the pleasure derived from immersion, — while so powerful were the rays of the sun, that my apparel—and I was clad in white linen—became dry nearly as soon as wetted.

On reaching Ahmedpúr we proceeded, as had been arranged, to the abode of the bakhshí, who, while he courteously welcomed me, was, setting aside his elevated position, by no means so refined a personage as his colleague and friend at Bahâwalpúr. He informed me that the khân was then at Daráwal, a fortress, eighteen cosses distant in the desert, where, it is understood, he keeps his treasures, as in a safe place, and where he frequently resides. The bakhshí was anxious that I should spend my time pleasantly until the khân revisited Ahmedpúr, which he was expected to do in a few days, and assigned me to the care of Ráhmat Khân, a Rohilla officer, who from long service in Hindostân was supposed to be acquainted with European manners and habits, and therefore competent to attend to my wants.

Ráhmat Khân cheerfully accepted his charge, and conducted me to his quarters, which were, indeed, not very good ones—still a distinct and tolerably fair house was prepared for my reception. The bakhshí was also careful to send after me a variety of provisions, with bedsteads, utensils, and water vessels, as is the usual observance in the case of public guests, amongst whom, I learned, that I was enumerated. Ráhmat Khân was a native of Rámpúr, in Northern India; and I gleaned from his history, that he had been a soldier of fortune, having commanded, in his palmy days, two battalions in the camp of the Mahrátta Sirdár Hírah Singh.

Afterwards he had served under the celebrated Amír Khân, and still later, under the banners of the Bhow Sáhíb, the chief of Jáwad, when, at the capture of that fortress by the British, he became a prisoner of war. When set at liberty he abandoned India, and gained Bahâwalpúr, where the command of one hundred men was conferred upon him, with the custody of the gharrí of Fázilpúr, on the frontier of Sind. His pay was fixed at two rupees per diem, but I was told he realized about five rupees by false musters, and practices which, if not permitted, are at least tolerated. Unable, however, to forget or to forego the gaieties to which he had been accustomed in the Mahrátta camps, he was necessarily involved in debt, to the large amount of six thousand rupees; and during my stay with him we had some nautches, spectacles of which, like most natives of India, he was excessively fond, and concluded that I must be equally so. His men were generally of the same town or province as himself. Many of them were attached to him when in better circumstances, and all of them, according to their own assertions, had been in more honourable and lucrative employ than that of the khân of Bahâwalpúr.

It was not long before the khân came to Bahâwalpúr, but as he remained only a day or two, and had much business to transact, the bakhshí, bewildered by his accounts, and the clamours of the soldiery for pay, forgot to inform him of my presence, and

ignorant thereof, the khân returned to his strong desert fastness, glad to shelter himself in its solitude from the importunities of his dependents, and the weighty cares of government.

The bakhshí, I found, had been born a slave of the reigning family, and had been promoted to his present office by the favour of the present khân. He is not emancipated, and his pay, as registered, is but eight annas, or half a rupee daily; still, having the management of large funds, he is enabled to enrich himself, and to live luxuriously. I attended at two or three of his levées, and was surprised at the freedom with which the meanest soldier addressed him. No delicacy was observed in the selection of language, and I wondered that he called me to witness, as it were, the torrents of abuse lavished upon him. When he dismissed his contentious clients, he conversed with me, and felt the conviction that I was a sirdar of no small consequence, from the circumstance of having made use of my hand in addressing him. He appeared to have little ability, and although considered the head of the forces, he never commands them on service, the post of honour being reserved for the Vazír Yákúb Máhomed Khân.

I expressed so strongly displeasure at his forgetfulness that we became worse friends than we had before been, and I told him that I should now continue my journey without seeing the khân. Fearful to incur blame, in that case, he replied, that I should

not proceed; which made me ask him, who he was who dared to prevent any one travelling on God's high roads? To which question he had no answer to make, but evasively suggested that I should engage in the khân's military service, as, he said, one Búra Sáhib (some European who had previously visited Bahâwalpúr) had done. To this I gave a peremptory refusal. I had understood from my Ahmedpúr acquaintance that the climate was very hostile to strangers; and I found that Búra Sáhib, the European mentioned by the bakhshí, had died from its baneful effects. Indeed the heat was seriously troublesome; and I was particularly anxious to move forward, which I should have done in spite of the bakhshí's prohibition had I not been seized by an intermittent fever, which entirely prostrated me. This misfortune increased my anger with the bakhshí, whom I reviled as being the cause of it; and he, apprehensive lest the termination should be fatal, sent the khân's hákíms or physicians, whose insignificant remedies I was obliged to reject; and being ignorant myself of the correct mode of treatment, my case became nearly hopeless. There seemed little chance of the khân's speedy re-appearance at Ahmedpúr, and as little that I should recover if I remained there, I therefore decided upon trying a change of air and locality; and from my inquiries, selected Allahabád, a town twenty cosses from Ahmedpúr, on the road to Sind. I accordingly left my effects in the charge of Ráhmat Khân, and

taking nothing but my sword, started, before sunrise, on the road pointed out to me. From the commencement of the fever, the glare of the sun had been peculiarly irksome to me, and I found it impossible to travel after sunrise, when I was compelled, wherever I might be, to seek the nearest shade and throw myself on the ground beneath it. The country through which I was passing was covered with tamarisk jangal, among which the villages and cultivated lands were sprinkled. The former were seldom visible from the road, but I was directed to them by the creaking of the wheels at the wells. At all of them was what is called a máchí, a person, generally a female, who provides lodging and prepares food for the stranger and traveller. I made so little progress that it was four or five days before I reached Vární, a large village on the road side, and I was so exhausted that I remained at the máchí's house two or three days, and then proceeded, somewhat recruited, towards Allahabád. The approach to this town was more pleasing than I had anticipated, for the jangal ceasing, I came upon a rivulet of running water, beyond which stretched a large expanse of meadow, and in the distance I beheld the cupola of the principal mosque of the place, embosomed in groves of date-trees. As I neared the town I came upon a veranda, carried around a huge pípal tree, which I found was one of the khân's hunting pavilions, and as the shade it afforded was very complete, I re-

posed the greater part of the day under it. I afterwards saw many other such pavilions in various parts of the country; and if simple in construction, they are not inelegant, while admirably adapted for the purpose for which they were formed. Towards evening I moved towards the town, and at its entrance was accosted by a well-dressed person, who at once invited me to his house. I accompanied him, and soon found myself comfortably located.

My new friend was most attentive; nor did his goodness merely extend to my entertainment; he proposed also to remove my disorder. He convened the physicians of the place; but their prescriptions were quite as inefficacious as those of their brethren at Ahmedpúr, and they laboured in vain to persuade me that conserve of roses and sugar-candy could cure inveterate fevers. I had every reason to be grateful for my reception here, but my disease seemed in no wise likely to yield, when in despair I became my own doctor, and, to the dismay of my well-meaning friends, sent for the 'ajâm, or barber, who bled me both on the hands and arms; I likewise drank plentifully of infusions of senna; and whether the remedies were judicious, or from other causes, I had the great satisfaction to find myself without fever, although in a deplorable state of weakness.

My hospitable entertainer was delighted and astonished at my recovery, from remedies he considered

desperate ones, but spared neither pains nor expense in the fare with which he provided me, under the idea of establishing my strength. I had found the cuisine of Khân Máhomed at Bahâwalpúr a very good one, and that of my Allahabád friend was not less entitled to praise. This commendable person, to whom I owe so much obligation, was Salám Khân, Dáoud putra, a man of affluent circumstances, and the principal authority in his town. I need not testify to his humanity, but may add, that he was extremely mild and modest in manners. I learned from his attendants that he was reputed a kímía ghar, or alchemist; but more instructed men than he was have their foibles, and with me he never discoursed on the subject.

Finding myself better, I proposed to return to Ahmedpúr, when Salám Khân begged me to stay yet another two or three days, when he would go there himself, and we should go together. In due time, a horse being saddled for my use, we started. My friend made a respectable appearance, and carried on his back a handsome quiver of arrows, the emblem of rank and dignity, and we were followed by some of his mounted attendants. Salám Khân being acquainted with the country, passed by a much nearer route than the high road by which I had journeyed, and skirting the edge of the desert, we were not long in reaching Vární, where we passed the night, and in the morning proceeded to Ahmedpúr. There we separated, Salám Khân re-

pairing to his friends, and I to my former quarters at Ráhmat Khân's. I found that my Rohilla acquaintance was favourably known to Salám Khân for his courteous and sirdar-like demeanour, and I became cognizant that he was generally respected throughout the country for the same reason.

Ráhmat Khân received me most cordially, and I had abundant congratulations on my recovery. I learned that the khân had not during my absence revisited Ahmedpúr, but that he was daily expected. In effect, he very soon came, and I notified to Ráhmat Khân that I intended to pay my respects to him, and he in turn informed the bakhshí, who now said that I should not see the khân, as I would not engage in his service. To which, when stated to me, I said, I would see the khân.

On going, however, to the khân's residence, for the purpose of an interview, I found that the people at the entrance had been instructed by the bakhshí to refuse me admittance. I discovered it was useless to argue with them, and was about to return, when Mútí Rám, the khân's Hindú dewân, or minister of finance, came out. He did not go so far as to act in opposition to the bakhshí, and procure me an interview with the khân, but, contrary to my wishes and expostulations, alighted from his horse, and insisted that I should ride the animal home. The truth was, I was still very feeble, which he observed, and his act at least showed that he was a humane man.

I had now determined to continue my journey westward, and was careless about seeing the khân, as I had really no business with him—thinking only of giving my friend the bakhshí a good lecture before I left. It happened, however, that near the town was a fine meadow, where, now that I felt able, I strolled in the evening; and here by chance, the khân, who never sleeps in Ahmedpúr, passed me, carried in a palanquin, and escorted by a numerous cavalcade. His eye caught me, and he ordered his conveyance to be halted; when he asked, who I was, how long I had been at Ahmedpúr, and why he had not been informed of it, at the same time making a motion with his hand for me to approach. I had not pressed through the crowd, when the khân resumed progress, but one of his attendants, to whom he had whispered something, apprised me that his lord would be glad to see me in the morning at darbár.

I had scarcely returned to Ráhmat Khân, and told him what had occurred, when a messenger came from the bakhshí, praying that I would call upon him. I accordingly went, and Ráhmat Khân accompanied me. We found the great man at prayers. When concluded, he joined us, and we had a long conversation, during which I upbraided him for his conduct in detaining me, and then for preventing my interview with the khân. He entreated me to engage in the service, telling me that the khân would make over to me his seven regi-

ments of infantry, with their guns, and sanction the levy of as many more. I repeated what I had before told him, that I would have nothing to do with them. He urged that Búra Sáhib, had before engaged in the service,—and I said, what suited the convenience of Búra Sáhib might not suit mine. He then recommended me to proceed, and join the Saiyad Ahmed Shâh. And I asked who was Saiyad Ahmed Shâh, and what I had to do with him. I was at this time ignorant as to the Saiyad, and the cause in which he was combating, and knew little more than that he was a deadly enemy of the Síkh's. The bakhshí was then desirous to learn where I intended to go, and whether to Dost Máhomed Khân of Kâbal. I answered, I should go where and to whom I pleased. He was, probably, little satisfied with the result of his interview, but he was so subdued that when I spoke sharply to him he actually trembled, which when we parted afforded a subject of merriment to Ráhmat Khân.

On the morrow I walked to the Killa, or residence of the khân, and was immediately ushered in at the gate. We passed a well-stocked aviary before being introduced to the khân's presence. He was seated, cross-legged, on a carpet, reclining on a large pillow, with his left arm resting on a black shield. He was plainly dressed in white linen, but had magnificent armlets of turquoises, set in gold. Before him was lying a double-barreled fowling-piece, and on each side of him European

sabres. His countenance was remarkably handsome, and bore every indication of goodness, although I recollected as I beheld it, that his accession to authority had been marked by the slaughter of some of his father's ministers, an usual consequence of the transfer of power in oriental states, yet barely excusable on that account. He was not above twenty-three or twenty-four years of age. He politely welcomed me, and directed his arms to be shown to me, that I might ascertain their fabric, while he explained how he had procured them. He made few other inquiries, either because he knew from the bakhshí, who was dutifully standing behind him, that I was obstinate in refusing to enter his service, or because, aware that I had been recently unwell, he was deterred by good feeling from wearying me. He asked the bakhshí, however, as to my diet, and was told that I ate everything, meat, fish, fowls, eggs, and, as was added, all at the same time, which I doubt not was thought very singular, although I did no more than they do constantly themselves. I soon received permission to depart, the good Mútí Rám mentioning that I was feeble; and I had gone a few paces when I was called back to be told, the khân had ordered a sum of money to be carried home with me for "mímâní," or my entertainment; and I saw the khân himself take three double-handfuls of rupees from two heaps which were piled up before him. I was glad to get away, and paid no attention to the present;

therefore, when I regained my quarters I received about sixty rupees, which must have been a small portion only of the sum given.

When again in my quarters, I found myself attended by numbers of the officers and men of the battalions, who it seemed had heard of the khân's wish to place them under me; and they urged me to accept the charge, for then, they said, the bakhshí would be unable to detain their pay, and they should receive it regularly. I expressed my doubts whether I should be likely to reform the incorrigible bakhshí, and assured them, apparently to their regret, that I did not intend to undertake the task. I received also, another application from the bakhshí, who, perhaps, thought the kind reception and liberality of the khân might have softened my resolution; but hearing that I was firm, he signified that I was at liberty to remain as long as I pleased at Ahmedpúr, or to go when and where I thought fit.

Although I had suffered much from fever and its consequences, during my stay at Ahmedpúr and its neighbourhood, I had every reason to be gratified with the civility of all classes of the people; and I found them always disposed to be communicative on points within their knowledge.

CHAPTER II.

BAHAWALPUR.

Boundaries.—Extent.—Distinctions of soil, &c.—Domestic animals, &c.—Towns.—Bahâwalpûr.—Barra Ahmedpúr.—Uch.—Khânpúr.—Chûta Ahmedpûr.—Gujugar Wâlla, &c.—Púlarah.—Múrût.—Moz Ghar.—Gûdíána.—Daráwal.—Fazilpúr.—Military strength.—Revenue.—Dáoudpûtras.—Bahâwal Khân.—Sâdat Khân.—Bahâwal Khân.

THE country of Bahâwalpûr is bounded on the north by the Síkh provinces of Múltân, Mankírah, and Líya. To the south it has the great desert, separating it from Jessalmír. On the east it touches to the north on the lands of the Síkh chief of Pátíala, and more directly east, on the frontiers of the Rájput principality of Bikkanír. Westward it is defined by the river Indus, which divides it from Mittan Rote, and a slip of territory dependent on Déra Ghází Khân; and lower down, from Harrand and Dájil, provinces of the Bráhúí Khân of Kalât.

From Gúdíána, its frontier town on the Pátíala side, to Chúta Ahmedpúr, where it connects with Northern Sind, the distance is one hundred and eighty cosses, or about two hundred and seventy miles; and from Púlarah, on the borders of Bikkanír, to Déra Ghází Khân, is computed one

hundred and forty cosses, or above two hundred miles. Its breadth importantly varies, being affected by the course of the Gárrah river to the north, and of the desert to the south. Its greatest breadths are on the extreme frontiers to the east and west. In the centre the pressure of the desert upon the cultivated parts allows but a comparatively small space between it and the river to the north.

In this extent there are some marked distinctions as to soil, character, and produce. The portion between Gúdíána and the capital I have not seen, but have heard spoken of in glowing terms as to fertility and population. The accounts may be credited, as its fertility would be secured by the vicinity of the Gárrah, and fertility would induce population. The portion of desert stretching eastward of Bahâwalpúr to Bikkanír, is of course but little productive, yet, as in many parts of it the surface has more soil than sand, there are, amongst other inhabited localities, the bazar towns of Púlarah, Múrút, and Moz Ghar, which drive a considerable trade in grain with the neighbouring states. In this tract also the camel thrives exceedingly, and finds ample sustenance in the prickly and saline plants which cover the surface. Neither are there wanting numerous herds of horned cattle; which are, however, continually shifting their position, being guided by the convenience of water. Their proprietors, in certain seasons of the year,

abandon their villages, and erect temporary abodes in the spots they select, which, as in Bikkanír, are called kétlís. At them the traveller finds abundance of milk, butter, &c. which at such times he might not procure at the villages they have abandoned. In remote times, rivers flowed through and fertilized this now sterile country; their beds may in many places be still traced; and numerous vestiges remain of ancient towns, in burned bricks and fragments of pottery strewed on the soil. The central districts of Uch, the capital, Khânpúr, Allahabád, and Ahmedpúr are distinguished by a most luxuriant cultivation of the various kinds of grain, of sugar, and of the indigo plant. There cannot be a more gratifying sight than is exhibited by this part of the country before the period of harvest, the whole surface presenting an expanse of standing grain, with villages, neatly constructed of reeds, interspersed, and accompanied with groups of trees, usually of the bér, and date species. As soon as the crops are removed, such is the exuberance of vegetation, that the ground is covered with plants and shrubs, and no one would suppose that the land, now mingled with the jangal, had so lately been under cultivation. Between Uch and Déra Ghází Khân there is much jangal, yet occasionally, or adjacent to the towns and villages, there is a vigorous cultivation of grain, and of sugar-cane, denoting that the soil is rich and prolific. From Bahâwalpúr to Khânpúr the country is rich and well-culti-

vated, although confined on the south by the sandy desert. From Khânpúr to Chúta Ahmedpúr the face of the country changes, and becomes more adapted for grazing; still, even in this direction there is much tilled land near the towns and villages. Although the larger proportion of surface in the Bahâwalpúr territory is spread over with jangal, it must not be supposed that it is unprofitable. On the contrary, it affords pasture to immense numbers of horned cattle, cows, and buffaloes,—sources of wealth and comfort to the inhabitants. Bikkanír, and other of the Rájput states to the east, mainly depend upon Bahâwalpúr for their supplies for consumption. There are few, if any countries in Asia, where provisions, the produce of the soil, are more abundant or cheaper than in the Bahâwalpúr state.

The domestic animals of Bahâwalpúr are, the camel, the buffalo, the common cow, the gaddí or short-tailed sheep, the goat, &c. The camel is reared in large numbers, as above stated, in the desert to the east, also in the neighbourhood of the capital and of Ahmedpúr. It is employed, to a limited extent, for agricultural purposes, being sometimes attached to the plough, or made to revolve the wheel at wells. In Bikkanír this animal is universally so employed, and partially in Sind. The buffalo is highly prized for its milk, which is delicious, and its meat is even preferred to that of the cow. Poultry are plentiful, but tame geese, I con-

clude, are rarities, having only seen them at Bakhshí Khân ka-Masjít. Wild fowl are so abundant in the western parts near the Indus, that at Fázilpúr a goose may be purchased for one of the small copper pais of the country, in value less than a halfpenny, and two or three ducks may be procured for the same sum. They are caught by a peculiar race, called Mohánís, who furnish the fishermen and sailors employed on the Indus. The jangals abound in game, as deer and the wild hog. Partridges, quail, bustards, pigeons, &c, are universal.

There are many opulent and commercial towns in the Bahâwalpúr dominions. Amongst the first class towns, may be reckoned Bahâwalpúr (the capital), Barra, or Great Ahmedpúr, Uch, Khânpúr, &c. Amongst the second class, Chúta, or Little Ahmedpúr, Allahabád, Gugujar Wâlla, Channí Khân di Got, Ghâzipúr, Kinjer, Púlarah, Múrút, Moz Ghar, Gúdíána, &c. The minor towns, or large bazar villages, are very numerous, and the number of agricultural villages and hamlets exceedingly great.

Bahâwalpúr is seated about two miles from the river Gárrah. It formerly had walls, the indications of which only exist, and are used as a walk for the inhabitants. The houses are chiefly constructed of kiln-burnt bricks, and are very much mixed with gardens. The whole is arranged in a loose straggling manner, and is on all sides encircled by groves of date and pípal trees. The public

buildings are not very remarkable, neither are any of the khân's palaces attractive residences. There is, indeed, a handsome stone masjít in progress of erection. This town is the seat of many manufactures, some of them costly, and has a large trade. It is sixty cosses from Múltân, one hundred and twenty cosses from Bikkanír, and sixty from Déra Ghází Khân.

Barra Ahmedpúr from having been merely a cantonment has become an extensive and commercial town, as well as the principal residence of the khân. It is seated on the verge of the desert. The killa, or palace of the chief, is yet unfinished. The houses are generally mean, but the gardens are good. From the favour of the khân, it may be considered a rising town, as Bahâwalpúr is on the decline.

Uch is, perhaps, the more ancient of the towns in the country. The name is borne by two towns contiguous to each other. One of them, Pír-ka-Uch, is bestowed on Pír Nassiradín, the spiritual adviser of the khân. They have both good bazars, and some commerce. Seated upon the Gárrah, grain-boats frequently descend from the two Uchs to Sind. They are principally, however, distinguished by the ruins of the former towns, their predecessors, which are very extensive, and attest the pristine prosperity of the locality. They are eighteen cosses from Ahmedpúr, and about forty cosses from Múltân.

Khânpúr is forty cosses from Barra Ahmedpúr. It is surrounded by a country amazingly fertile, and is a depôt for indigo, rice, and all kinds of grain. It has no pretensions to be considered a handsome town; neither, judged by its traffic, can it be called a large one. Some of the Hindús have spacious residences, yet, generally speaking, the houses are very indifferent. The ancient walls have fallen down, and have not been replaced. Without their ruins are many dilapidated serais, and other buildings. There is no fort here; nor is it judged necessary to keep a garrison.

Chúta Ahmedpúr is a fair-sized town, with good bazar, and surrounded with mud walls. Within them are some more recently fortified erections, but they are detached, and have no connection with each other, so that they seem to have been raised in pursuance of a plan never completed, as is probably the case. Otherwise they are well built, of kiln-burnt bricks. Being the frontier town towards Sind, a regiment of three hundred and fifty men, with six guns, is stationed at Ahmedpúr.

Gujugar Wâlla, Channí Khân di Got, Gházípúr, and Kinjer, are all small, but commercial towns, principally in grain, the produce of the country.

Púlarah, on the frontier of Bikkanír, has a good bazar, but is not perhaps very commercial. The fortress adjacent has been a superior building, for these parts, but is now sadly in decay. There was once a good trench; the walls are very high, and

the battlements are tastefully decorated. The killedar's house soars above the ramparts, and the whole has an antique and picturesque appearance, particularly from the northern side, where the walls are washed by a large expanse of water, in which is a small island studded with trees. There are three guns at Púlarah.

Múrút is a town of importance, as regards its trade in grain, but of little as to its aspect. It is surrounded with mud walls of considerable extent, and strengthened by numerous towers. It is the station of a regiment, with six guns.

Moz Ghar is not so large a town as Múrút, but its contiguous fortress is a lofty structure, built of kiln-burnt bricks. On the western face the walls have been perforated with cannon balls, which, we are told, happened in the siege it endured from the first Bahâwal khân. The apertures have never been repaired, being supposed evidences of the obstinacy of the defence and of the strength of the fortress. They, however, show its weakness, for they enable us to detect the slightness of the walls. East of the fort is a pool of water, shaded by a grove of trees, amongst which is a huge pípal, an object of veneration to the Hindús of the town. At a slight distance to the north is a Máhomedan tomb, handsomely decorated with lacquered blue and white tiles.

Gúdiána being a frontier town, is the station of a regiment, with its attached guns. It is said to have a good bazar and some trade.

The chief fortress of the state is Duráwal, before noted, equidistant from Ahmedpúr and Bahâwalpúr, or eighteen cosses from each. It is represented as strong, and possibly some care has been bestowed upon it, as the khâns have always selected it for the deposit of their hoards, and for an asylum in case of invasion. Its chief dependence in such a case, would appear to be in its situation, and the difficulty a besieging army would find in subsisting near it, there being no water to be procured without the walls at a shorter distance than nine cosses. It has been seen, that the desert between the capital and Bikkanír is abundantly stocked with fortresses, which were formerly more needed than at present. Besides those enumerated, the gharrís, or castles, at Jam Ghar and Míhr Ghar are built of kiln-burnt bricks, but have no longer garrisons. Six cosses from Chúta Ahmedpúr is Fázilpúr, also a gharrí, with a garrison of one hundred and fifty men, which furnishes a detachment of fifteen men to Kandérí, a ruinous castle in the desert, in the direction of Jessalmír. Kandérí is twenty-seven cosses from Fázilpúr, and the limit of the khân's territory.

The troops consist of seven regiments of infantry, of three hundred and fifty men each, forming a total of two thousand four hundred and fifty. To each regiment are attached six guns, which may suppose some four hundred artillerymen. There are, besides, foot companies of Rohillas and Patáns, of fifty, one hundred, and two hundred men each, under

their respective officers, having, each one, two or three níshâns, or standards, as the case may be. These men possibly amount to one thousand. There are, moreover, horsemen in regular pay, who can scarcely exceed in number from two to three thousand. The grand total of the army may be from six to seven thousand men. They are badly equipped, irregularly paid, and, I suspect, not very warlike. The regiments have no sort of discipline. The natives affirm the military force to consist of fourteen thousand men, which I think can only be correct as including all the jághírdárs, and others, whom it might be possible to assemble in case of emergency.

The annual revenue is estimated at eighteen lakhs of rupees, one half of which is paid to the Síkhs. But then the khân rents from them the city and territory of Déra Ghází Khân, for three lakhs of rupees; and it is believed that he gains two lakhs thereby.

The reigning chief at Bahâwalpúr is of a Jet family, called Dáoudpútra, or the sons of David. They formerly lived about Shíkárpúr, but becoming numerous, and perhaps refractory, they were expelled; and crossing the Indus, possessed themselves of the country, where they established separate and independent chiefships. Many of their leaders built towns, to which they gave their respective names; hence Bahâwalpúr, the town of Bahâwal; Ahmedpúr, the town of Ahmed; Fazilpúr, the town of Fázil; Sabzul Kot, the kot or fort of Sabzal; &c. &c.

There is mention in the history of Amír Taimúr, of a notorious freebooter named Dáoud, in the vicinity of Shíkárpúr; and this good man may have been the ancestor of the present Dáoudpúṭras. I know not how long the various leaders may have subsisted in a state of independence, or subject to the sovereignty of Delhí, but the dislocation of the Chághatai empire permitted Bahâwal Khân, the grandfather of the present khân, to reduce them all, and to make himself absolute. He grew so powerful as to be the terror of his neighbours, and to resist the claims of tribute made on him by the Duraní monarch of Kâbal, Taimúr Sháh, who found himself compelled to enforce it with an army. Bahâwal Khân died full of years and renown, and was succeeded by his son, Sâdat Khân, favourably known to Europeans by his cordial reception of the British embassy to Kâbal in 1808. At a subsequent period he compromised himself with Máhárájá Ranjit Sing, whose conquests had extended his authority over Múltân; and Sâdat Khân, unable to oppose him, was constrained to purchase peace by submission, and the payment of an annual tribute. He died soon after, and left his enfeebled sway to the present Bahâwal Khân.

This chief, I have before observed, has a prepossessing appearance, and I believe is generally popular. His ministers relieve him, in great measure, from the toils of government, and his time is principally occupied in amusements, of which shikár, or

the chase, is the most prominent. He has, however, other accomplishments, and is a very tolerable mechanic.

Since my visit to Bahâwalpúr, the train of events in these quarters had brought about a treaty between the khân and the government of India, by which his relations with the Síkhs were placed on a secure footing, and a British resident, or agent, was located at his court. In the commencement of the unfortunate expedition against Kâbal in 1838, the awkwardness of the political officer employed to procure the coöperation, so far as necessary, of the khân, had nearly involved that chief in embarrassment with the British government, and, in despair, he was thinking of terminating his existence by a dose of poison. Luckily, Sir Henry Fane proceeded down the Satlej and Gárah, in his route to Bombay, and visited Bahâwalpúr. His straight-forward manners dispelled the doubts and apprehensions of the bewildered chief, and Sir Henry had the gratification to save a good man from the evils which threatened him.

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Ahmedpúr.—Country between Ahmedpúr and the Indus.—The Indus.—Déra Ghází Khân.—Christmas-day.—Departure from Déra Ghází Khân.—Bahâwalpúr army.—Arrival at the Sang Ghar frontier.—Alarm in camp.—Arrival at Sang Ghar.—Assad Khân.—Sang Ghar.—Revenue of Assad Khân.—His bravery.—His fate.—Country between Sang Ghar and Déra Fatí Khân.—Déra Fatí Khân.—Superstition of Ranjit Sing.—Gerong.—Déra Ismael Khân.—Destruction of old city.—Progress of the new one.—Its fortress.—Revenue.—Military strength.—Former Nawâb dispossessed by the Síkhs.—Country around Déra Ismael Khân.—Its capabilities.—Origin of the three Déras.—The Nawâb Shír Máhomed Khân.—His amusements and character.—Sherín Khân, the vazír.

I HAD arranged for departure from Ahmedpúr, when I learned that Yákúb Máhomed Khân, the khân's chief minister, or vazír, was proceeding to Déra Ghází Khân and Sang Ghar, with an army, for the purpose of compelling the petty chief of the latter place to pay tribute. It became, therefore, partly necessary to shape my course according to the vazír's movements, as both the places lay in my route, and it might not be prudent to enter the Sang Ghar district until some arrangement had been made. I consequently kept myself informed of Yákúb Máhomed Khan's plans; and when he finally marched from Ahmedpúr, I did so likewise.

The distance from Ahmedpúr to Déra Ghází Khân is computed at sixty cosses, or ninety miles. Numerous villages and small towns occur on the road, and two or three considerable ones, as Uch, Kinjer, &c. Some of them are held by the Síkhs, whose territory on this frontier is curiously dove-tailed into that of the khân of Bahâwalpúr; and I noted, that all those under Síkh rule were more flourishing in appearance than those under the Máhomedan government, as well as being much more cleanly, which I accounted for by supposing that the Hindús, always the principal inhabitants, felt themselves at liberty under Síkh sway to display their wealth, whereas under Máhomedan masters they were studious to conceal it. The surface of the country was generally covered with jangal, of long grass, and tamarisk trees, in some places so dense, that it was difficult to pass through it. I, however, suspect that we were conducted by a circuitous route, and that there was a much better and more open route by which the army marched. The jangal swarmed with wild hogs and deer, and in many spots we remarked the grass trodden or beaten down, indicating they had been scenes of the khân's hunting exploits. On such occasions, a large tract is enclosed by multitudes, collected from the country around. They gradually close in upon the pavilion in which their ruler, with his favoured attendants, is seated, driving the animals, hemmed in within the circle, before them, when he deliberately aims at

them, and estimates his triumph by the number of the helpless victims he brings to the ground.

It was not without emotion that I approached the river Indus, hallowed by so many historical recollections, and now the boundary, as once possibly the parent seat of the Hindú races. I found it, perhaps, nearly as low as it could ever be; still its bed was most extensive, and at the point we crossed must have been three miles in breadth. There were two or three boats at the ferry, but the wide expanse of sand, and the scanty reeds and shrubs fringing the opposite shores, gave a feature of loneliness to the prospect, which required the strength of associations to relieve. Numerous, on the borders, were the tracks of tigers, which, from such tokens, must be very common, although they are seldom seen, and, I learned, seldom do harm. I felt, however, a deep interest of another kind, in reflecting on the people and scenes I was about to leave behind, and on the unknown lands and races the passage of the river would open to my observation. If a feeling of doubt for a moment clouded my mind, one of pride at having penetrated so far removed it, and encouraged me to proceed farther.

Three or four miles beyond the river we entered the immense assemblage of date groves and gardens, amid which the large, populous, and commercial town of Déra Ghází Khân is situated. In the town itself, we were provided with good quarters, and were not sorry that we should be obliged to halt a

a few days at it, as Yákúb Máhomed Khân required some time to complete his arrangements, before making his offensive demonstration against Sang Ghar, now thirty cosses distant.

The town of Déra Ghází Khân, but a few years before the residence of a Dúrání governor, contained within its limits numerous vestiges, which denoting its present depressed political condition, also pointed to its former prosperity. Such were large brick-built residences, with extensive gardens, either desolated or occupied by humble tenants, and the public mosques, neglected and falling to decay. The bazars, with no pretensions to appearance, or even cleanliness, were still capacious and well supplied, and the merchants carried on a good trade, Déra being one of the commercial marts visited by the Lohání merchants of Afghânistân, while it does good business with the immediately adjacent parts.

During our stay here we spent our Christmas-day, and the abundance of every thing enabled us to regale ourselves bountifully, while we enjoyed the luxuries of fresh grapes, pears, and apples, brought by the traders from the orchards of Kâbal. The nights here were particularly cold, and the days equally warm; indeed the vicissitudes of temperature at Déra render it an unhealthy place, and strangers are liable to intermittent and other fevers.

The Máhomedan inhabitants complained much of their misfortune in being under Síkh domination, while the Hindús joined with them in deprecating

the rapacity of the Bahâwalpúr chief, who farms the revenues from Máhárájá Ranjit Singh. Both parties also united in regretting that the Dúrání power had passed away. And amongst their ancient governors they affectionately remembered the Nawâb Jabár Khân, extolling his liberality and his humanity.

The vazír being at length prepared to march, we started with him, and contrived to pass the night in the village near to which he encamped with his troops. We had now a better opportunity than before of observing his little army, and its composition. There were about three thousand men, horse and foot, with six guns. The appearance of the soldiers told little for them; and if by that test their prowess in the field might have been estimated, I should have thought them lucky to escape collision with a determined foe. On inquiry as to the means of opposition at the command of the khân of Sang Ghar, I was told, that he was personally a brave man, and that he had a body of seven hundred good horse, mostly Afghâns, and more than a match for the whole of the vazír's force, besides the less esteemed foot levies, from his raiyats, or subjects.

It was not, however, expected, by the best informed, that a contest would take place; but that, after a little blustering the khân would submit with the best grace he could, and pay the tribute, thirty thousand rupees, demanded of him; for, even should he succeed in discomfiting the vazír, he would be

apprehensive of drawing down upon him a large Sîkh force, when he would be compelled to abandon his country.

We marched through the lands dependent on Déra Ghází Khân without much order or precaution; but on entering the domain of Sang Ghar the vazír observed greater vigilance, especially as reports were rife that the khân's intentions were warlike. Indeed, we halted at the first village, and Yákúb Máhomed Khân showed no disposition to advance, seeming to await the arrival of his opponent, who, it was said, was advancing to his encounter. We were accommodated in this village, placed on a mound, and had an excellent view of the camp on the plain beneath. The delay became so tedious, that we heartily wished matters would be settled one way or the other, that we might continue our journey; which, so far as security was concerned, we might no doubt have done, but the vazír did not appear to wish it. It chanced, that one afternoon an alarm was raised in the camp, that the Sang Ghar force was in full advance, and had interrupted the foragers. Yákúb Máhomed Khân immediately mounted, and rode towards his foe, followed by horse and foot, in the greatest possible disorder. The guns were left in the camp, which was entirely deserted. About sunset the force returned, having met with no enemy, whom probably they did not seek; but the nagáras, or kettle-drums, were beaten before the vazír with as much noise

and parade as if he had gained a victory. Two or three days after, a settlement was effected, the Sang Ghar chief paying, or engaging to pay the sum required of him, and Yákúb Máhomed Khân retired from his frontier.

We now followed the road to Sang Ghar, where we were courteously received and hospitably entertained by Assad Khân, the chief who had so lately been pugnaciously inclined. He was, I found, a Baloch by nation, and a stout well-looking man of about forty-five years of age. He complained of the encroachments of the Síkhs, and lamented he had not more powerful means to resist them. He was, moreover, very anxious to be supplied with restorative medicines. With these I was unable to oblige him; and as to his position with the Sikhs, I could comprehend that it was unfortunate, for it required little foresight to feel the conviction that, enclosed as was his small territory by the confines of those powerful neighbours, it would hardly elude their grasp eventually, and that the chief would be fortunate, if he avoided being cajoled into captivity, to become a fugitive in the hills, where, if he lost the possessions of his ancestors in the plains, he might preserve at least his personal freedom.

The khân resided in a mud fortress of some extent, but with very dilapidated defences. Contiguous were the mean huts of his soldiery, and at a trifling distance the bazar village of Mangalot. The term Sang Ghar, (the stone fort,) is applied, if

unappropriately, to the mud fortress. It implies, however, merely a strong place, which Sang Ghar is supposed to be by the people of this country, and who were often displeased to find that I could not concur with them. The revenue of the state was said to be one lakh and twenty thousand rupees, of which, it has been seen, the khân of Bahâwalpúr, at the instigation of the Síkhs, or in exercising the privilege of the stronger party, enforces the payment of thirty thousand rupees.

It is due to Assad Khân to record that he has, in more than one encounter, proved himself a brave soldier, and on one occasion he gained a splendid advantage over the Síkh governor of Mankírah in an action fought on the banks of the Indus. Some years after I saw him, it became the policy of the Síkhs to possess themselves of Sang Ghar, and they did so after a well contested struggle, in which Assad Khân sustained his former reputation, and gave them two or three defeats. He sought refuge in the hills, and has since been little heard of.

In continuing our journey from Sang Ghar to the north, we passed through a tract of country compressed between the river and the hill ranges to the west, the road sometimes nearing the one and the other. The skirts of the hills presented a change in the vegetable productions, and we were pleased to breathe a purer atmosphere. Villages were less numerous, and very meanly constructed; the inhabitants were Patáns, and the Pashto dialect was

spoken by them, although they generally understood that of the Panjâb. The cultivated produce was similar to that of the southern parts, and turnips of large size were largely grown as food for cattle. Herds of buffaloes were everywhere grazing in the rank pastures of the jangals.

Thirty cosses of road distance led us beyond the khân's frontier, and we entered a more fertile tract, dependent on the town of Déra Fatí Khân, held by the Síkhs. It is smaller than Déra Ghází Khân, but is clean, and has a good and well-supplied bazar. Cultivation around it is not only general, but choice, as, besides some sugar-cane, there were fields of poppies, from which some opium is extracted. The villages have an appearance of greater comfort than those of Sang Ghar, evincing at least the mildness and protecting influence of the Síkh government — although no advantages can compensate, to their Máhomedan subjects, the idea of subjection to infidels, and the prohibition to slay kine, and to repeat the azân, or summons to prayer.

The district attached to Déra Fatí Khân extends some ten cosses to the south, and about five cosses to the north, where it connects with the territory of Déra Ismael Khân. It is worthy of note, that it is the only tract west of the Indus *boná fide* retained by the Máhárájá Ranjit Singh, although he has reduced all the countries immediately bordering on that river to a state of tributary allegiance. I have heard it observed, that he has a superstitious

notion which renders him averse to establishments on the western bank. That he has overcome such prejudices, or departed from his prescribed policy, in this instance, may be owing to the superior fertility of the district, and that it was deemed advisable to occupy Gerong, a fortress reputed strong, about three cosses west of the town, and where are a few guns and a garrison of three hundred men. At Déra Fatí Khân there were no troops.

From Déra Fatí Khân our road mostly led along the river banks; the jangal became more intricate, and the villages farther apart, and more rudely built, for we were now in the territory of another Máhomedan ruler, the nawâb of Déra Ismael Khân. The cultivation, when occurring, was wheat and turnips. At this season the wheat had just appeared above the surface; and it is the custom to allow cattle to graze the rising crops, which, so far from causing injury to them, is said greatly to increase the vigour and productiveness of the mature plants.

Forty cosses brought us to Déra Ismael Khân, immediately before reaching which we passed the large village of Morad Alí. This Déra is a newly built town, about three miles from the river, its predecessor seated thereon, having been carried away, about three years since, by an inundation. So complete was the destruction, that of a large and well fortified city no token remains to testify that it once existed. Two or three date-trees have only survived the wreck of its groves and gardens,

and in graceful majesty exalt their heads amongst the surrounding desolation.

The new town promises to become very extensive. The bazar is already spacious, and of commodious breadth, an improvement on the general arrangement of Indian towns, where bazars are mostly, of all parts, the most narrow and confined. On the destruction of the old town the village of Morad Alí became of consequence, being the temporary resort of the nawâb and inhabitants; and, the new town lying about two cosses from it, they will likely in time become incorporated. Indeed, the various buildings, with the serais, already nearly fill the intermediate space. Déra Ismael Khân is one of the greatest marts on the Indus, and an entrepôt for the merchandize of India and Khorasân passing in this direction. Few sites have a greater commercial importance. The customs levied form the chief source of revenue. The new fortress is not one of strength, the Síkhs forbidding the erection of too substantial a place of defence. It is small in extent, of a rectangular form, with angular towers, on which are mounted six pieces of ordnance, taken in an engagement with the chief of Ták. The walls are high, but there is no trench. The inner fort, or fortified residence of the nawâb's family, is protected by a ditch; the walls are lofty, and the several faces are defended by jinjáls.

The district belonging to Déra Ismael Khân

extends about forty cosses to the north, and thirty-five cosses to the south. The nawâb, moreover, exacts tribute, either on his own account or on that of the Síkhs, from most of the petty rulers around him, such as those of Kalaichí, Darraband, Marwat, Isá Khél, and Kâlabâgh. His gross revenue may be about three lakhs of rupees, of which the Síkhs take one-half. His military retainers are few, but in occasions of need, he calls forth a levy from his country and his neighbours. While I was in the country it became necessary to assemble a force to proceed against Marwat, and I was astonished to see collected on the plain an array of two thousand horsemen, comparatively well mounted and equipped.

The father of the actual nawâb, who was visited by Mr. Elphinstone in 1808, possessed a fertile country east of the river, comprising the rich and populous districts of Bakkar, Líya, and Mankírah, —while on the western side his authority extended to Sang Ghar. He was dispossessed by the Síkhs, and died shortly after. The conquerors have assigned the son, the present Nawâb Shír Máhomed Khân, a slip of land west of the Indus for the support of himself and family.

Seven cosses north-west of Déra is the small bazar town and detached castle of Kúyah. It has a garrison of fifty men, and is the frontier post on the side of Ták. Twelve cosses north is the town of Pahárpúr, situated, as its name implies, under

the hills. Besides these there are no other places deserving the appellation of towns, if we except Morad Alí, before-mentioned. The water of the new city is supplied from wells, and is reputed unwholesome. The country about Déra Ismael Khân might be rendered highly productive, were it possible to divert upon its ample and level surface canals from the Indus. The neglected waste would become a garden of cultivation, and the copious returns would speedily repay the outlay. It is said that the nawâb was anxious to have supplied his new city with good water by bringing a canal from the Gomal river, which runs through the Ták territory, but the chief of that place, whose sanction was necessary, withheld it. There can hardly be said to be jangal in the immediate vicinity of Déra Ismael Khân, the wide open plain being merely occasionally sprinkled with karíta bushes, whose red blossoms have a delightful appearance in the spring season. Near the villages are always a few bér trees, the fruit of which is eaten, and sometimes the palma ricinus, with its tufts of scarlet flowers; but no other trees. Tuberoses are indigenous here, and springing up unheeded in the jangal, they are, when cultivated, the favourite flowers of the parterre.

It may be noted, that the three Déras west of the Indus have an antiquity of nearly three hundred years, superseding necessarily more ancient towns. They were originally Déras, or camps of

chiefs, whose names they now bear, a mention of whom occurs in Ferishta, and is thus stated in Dow's History:—"In 1541, or thereabout, Ismael, Ghází, Fatí, and Billoca Duda, (Doda Baloch?) all governors of various provinces in that part of the country, acknowledged the title of Shír."

The Nawâb Shír Máhomed Khân is about thirty-five years of age. Although believed to feel keenly his dependent situation on the Síkhs, his chagrin does not prevent him from being corpulent, as becomes a nawâb, or from amusing himself with many childish diversions. Indeed it seems the principal business of those about him to find subjects fit to excite his mirth, and to enable him to wile away his existence. Hence he entertains fiddlers, wrestlers, keepers of bears and of monkeys, and often enjoys the spectacle of ponies fighting in his flower-gardens. When one of the animals gives the other a good shake of the neck the nawâb claps his hands, and cries Wah! wah! His attendants do the same, and the apartments resound with clapping of hands and shouts of Wah! wah! It is wonderful how all seem to delight in the sport. He is fond of hunting, and is very dexterous with his bow. He also prides himself on his strength, and it is asserted can break the horns of an ox from the living animal. Overlooking these foibles, he is kind and good-natured, and pays great attention to his mother. His minister was Sherín Khân, a Dúrání, whose power was so great as to

be irksome to the nawâb. Thêre was great distrust between them; and when the nawâb entertained men, the minister, who lived at Morád Alí, did the same. The latter commanded the force which discomfited the Ták army some time since, and is said to have received one lakh of rupees from Sirwar Khân as a bribe to conclude peace. While I was at Déra, Ranjit Singh ordered the nawâb to repair to Lahore. He accordingly made preparations for the journey, and called upon Sherín Khân for funds to defray the outfit and expenses. The minister alledged inability to meet the demands; whereupon high words arose, and the nawâb determined to institute an inquiry into his accounts. I left before the matter was settled, but learned that Sherín Khân thought fit to retire to Bahâwalpúr.

CHAPTER IV.

Interview with the nawâb. — Sárkis, an Armenian. — Amusements. — Hindú Gosén. — Síkhs. —Máhá Singh.—The Húlí.— The bazar.—Kaisa Ghar. —Departure from Déra Ismael Khân. —Ták.—The citadel.—Fáquir's prediction.—Fruit.—Bazar.— Revenue.—Military force.—History of Sirwar Khân.—His sons. —Alladád Khân.—Darbarra.—Insalubrity of Ták.—Beauty of the gardens. — Introduction to Sirwar Khân. — Interview with Alladád Khân. — Carousals of Alladád Khân.—Introduction of Immat Khân, vakíl of Sind.—Síkh party.—Anecdote of Sirwar Khân.—Departure from Ták.

THE nawâb was soon informed of my arrival, and as soon conveyed his desire to see me. In the interview which followed he was very gracious, and at its close gave particular directions that every attention should be paid to me; while apologizing that the unfinished state of the buildings prevented the assignment of a house for my abode, he ordered tents to be pitched within the citadel in which he resided. I remained some time his guest, saw a good deal of him, and always found him most affable in manners and remarkably free from any affectation of form or state. One day he produced a variety of articles, belonging once, he said, to Sarkis, an Armenian merchant or traveller, who was murdered within his territory by Afghân or

Rohilla servants. Amongst them were Armenian Bibles and Prayer Books, sundry accounts, and many English quack-medicines, the virtues and properties of which the nawâb was very anxious to learn. I explained to him the miracles they professed to perform, according to the labels and papers attached to them, but conjured him to be considerate enough not to employ them, as age had probably impaired their efficiency, if ever they had any. He also introduced a former slave of the unfortunate Armenian, who detailed the mode of assassination of his master.

The nawâb never failed to send for me when any amusements took place; and they were so incessantly repeated, that some little philosophy was requisite to sit patiently during their exhibition. When nothing more unusual was at hand, recourse was had to his musicians and minstrels; and their concerts, although highly charming to him, were of all things the most distasteful to me. He sometimes intimated a wish that I would remain with him, and his people would endeavour to persuade me to engage in his service, but I gave them to understand it was impossible; and the nawâb, perhaps conscious there was little inducement, did not press the matter. As Europeans are considered necessarily expert artillerists, he more than once ordered his guns to be taken on the plain for practice, at a mark. He was himself, however, their sole pointer, and when he made a tolerably good

shot he toddled away, as if deterred by modesty from listening to the plaudits which burst forth.

There was living at Déra a Hindú Gosén of great repute, upon whom I called, as he sent me a message that Elphinstin Sáhib had paid him a similar compliment. However that may have been, the sage of Bráhma was a bland old gentleman. He received me very politely, and sent a tray of sweetmeats home with me on my departuture.

Two Síkh retainers of Harí Singh, Máhárájá Ranjit Singh's viceroy, on his western frontiers, were also resident at Déra. They occupied a large house in the town, and once or twice I visited them. In one of their apartments was the Granth or sacred book of the Síkhs; and many of the Banyas were accustomed to attend and read it, which they always did aloud. It was preserved with great care, and approached with reverence. I was yet in this town when Máhá Singh one of Harí Singh's officers, arrived, with sixty horsemen, demanding the sum of sixty thousand rupees, and bearing a summons upon the nawâb to attend the Máhárájá at Lahore. These men crossed the river, and suddenly one morning entered the citadel, before the nawâb had risen. They talked very loudly, asking what sort of a darbár was that of Déra, there being no one to receive them. The claim could not be evaded or resisted, and Máhá Singh and his party were stationed in the town, and provided sumptuously at the nawâb's charge, until he should be able to pay

the amount called for. By a similar process Harí Singh collects tribute from the petty chiefs west of the Indus; and simultaneously another party, of equal strength, was dispatched on an analogous mission to Sirwar Khân, the nawâb of Ták. During Máhá Singh's stay the Hindú festival of the Hulí occurred. It had not before been publicly celebrated by the Hindús, but this year they had not only permission, but the nawâb gave a largess of two hundred rupees to his own Hindú soldiers to enable them to divert themselves worthily—only enjoining them to refrain from their joyous demonstrations within the precincts of the citadel, in respect to the feelings of his aged mother. Máhá Singh invited me to witness the festivities at his quarters, and was very courteous, although on his arrival he had pronounced me to be an agent of the Company.

It will have been seen, that Déra afforded no lack of amusements,—the bazar, with its large concourse of strangers, was itself perhaps the most interesting spectacle. Here were to be found numerous visitors from the rude tribes of the hills, clad in their felt cloaks and uncouth sandals. Many were gigantic men, and curiosity was powerfully excited to know the lands from which they came, and the races to which they belonged. From Déra, moreover, is seen, to the west, the magnificent hill Khaisa Ghar, or the Takht Súlímân, famed in traditionary lore as the spot on which the ark rested,

and for being the parent seat of the Afghân races. Its habitable parts are occupied by the Shíránís, a lawless tribe, who also hold the inferior hills between it and the plains. They have for neighbours, the Míhrânís, their colleagues in marauding expeditions, and of equally infamous reputation. The vegetable productions of Khaisa Ghar are much vaunted, and it is remarked that whatever plant or tree may be found in other countries, will be certainly met with here. Firs and olives are abundant on its sides, as generally over the minor hills of the range. The weather beginning to grow sultry, and inactivity becoming irksome, my thoughts turned towards Kâbal and its cool climate. I was scarcely competent to appreciate the information I acquired as to the better mode of reaching it, but finally decided to gain Ták, and endeavour to find companions on the route followed by the Loháni merchants. I accordingly took leave of the good nawâb of Déra and passed on to Kúyah, a small bazar village, with castle, seven cosses distant. I then entered the Ták territory at Pote, and successively leaving Ottára and numerous villages behind me, reached the town of that name, computed to be thirty cosses distant from Déra Ismael Khân. The country from Kuyah to Pote was barren enough, but afterwards it was well cultivated, as water abounds; and in addition to the various kinds of grain, much cotton is produced. I was civilly received at all the villages, and had

no difficulty in procuring entertainment and lodging. The approach to Ták from the east, is distinguished by an avenue of full-grown mimosas, extending perhaps three miles. The town itself is surrounded by a mud wall, of tolerable height and solidity; it has numerous towers, and two or three gates. Within the town is a citadel, where resides the chief; the walls are lofty, and strengthened with a broad and deep trench. It is built of kiln-burnt bricks, and at the four angles are ample towers, provided with twelve or thirteen pieces of artillery. The interior of this fortress is very intricately disposed; and Sirwar Khân, who planned it, appears to have been determined to place it out of the power of his neighbours to drive him out of his nest. It is the most massive piece of defensive erection I have seen in these parts, if Girong be excepted, which I have not seen. Sirwar Khân, the nawâb, is constantly employed in building. No one knows what he does, but every one witnesses the egress and ingress of labourers, laden with bricks and rubbish, from and into the gates of his citadel. It is believed that a fáquír predicted to him that the duration of his rule and prosperity depended upon his never ceasing to build.

Ták is famed for its fruits, which are plentiful and cheap. Its gardens yield grapes, oranges, pomegranates, citrons, plums, apples, &c. East of the town is an immense grove of shâhtút, or long mulberry trees, which have attained a size superior to

any I have elsewhere observed. The bazar of the town is not extensive, nor do I believe the commerce to be large, or so much so as to allure the residence of wealthy Hindús, as at Kalaichí and at Déra. The revenue of Sirwar Khân is estimated at one and a half lakh of rupees, of which the Síkhs exact a portion, I believe sixty thousand rupees. Being at enmity with his neighbours on the plain, he retains about a thousand men in pay, mostly Rohillas, on small stipends. These, however, in consequence of some misunderstanding, left him while I was in these quarters, and I believe he did not think it worth while to replace them. He is represented as having much wealth in coin and jewels. During the early part of his reign he constituted himself sole proprietor of the lands in his country, and declared the peasants to be his slaves; hence he derived the profit on the whole of their produce.

The history of this chieftain is singular enough to merit notice. He had scarcely seen the light, when his father, who also ruled at Ták, was slain by a traitor, who usurped the authority. To confirm himself therein he put to death the family of his ancient prince, with the exception of Sirwar, who, an infant, was concealed by his nurse in an earthen jar, and carried out of the town on her head. The good woman affirmed at the gates that she was conveying a jar of milk. She gained a place of safety, and brought up the young khân as her own son. When

he arrived at the years of discretion she informed him of the circumstances of his birth. He thereupon presented himself to Ahmed Shâh, the first Dúránî prince, and requested his assistance to recover possession of the lands of his ancestors. It was granted, and Sirwar Khân, in turn, slew the usurper, with his relatives. He then placed their heads in a heap, and sitting on them, summoned the chiefs and elders of the country to his presence. He demanded, whether they were willing to acknowledge him as their ruler. An affirmative reply being given, he announced, that in virtue of his authority, he resumed all lands, and that they were not his subjects but his slaves. I believe that an attempt to infringe upon the liberties of his people, cost the father of Sirwar Khân his life; the son may therefore have felt justified in this energetic vindication of his father's memory. Seated on the masnad, he repaired the town of Ták, and constructed the capacious citadel with a view both to security and pleasure, and seems to have devoted himself to the amassing of treasure, and to the gratification of his sensual appetites. His zenána, or female establishment, contains above two hundred females, and he, with his family, freely indulge in the illicit pleasures of wine, although he prohibits its use to others on the score of morality, and because it is contrary to the precepts of the Korân.

Sirwar Khân is now advanced in years, and has three sons, Alladád, Khodâdád, and Sáhibdád. The

eldest, Alladád, is called the vazír, and, ostensibly, has the direction of public business, holding darbárs, and relieving his father from all details. The young man is a drunkard, yet he is beloved in the country for his valour and generosity. In a war with the Nawâb of Déra, some four or five years since, he commanded the Ták troops, about four thousand in number, the greater portion of them Vazírí auxiliaries, or mercenaries. These banditti fled at the commencement of the action, leaving the guns exposed, which were captured. Alladád highly distinguished himself, dismounting, and working one of the guns, after it had been deserted by its attendants. He remained by it until he had received two sword cuts from Sherín Khân, the commander of the hostile forces, who recognized him. Then only was he induced to remount his horse and provide for his safety. Peace was purchased by the payment of one lakh of rupees to Sherín Khân.

Besides Ták, there are other two or three small towns or large villages, and many inferior ones, which have bazars. The fortress of Darbarra is situated at the mouth of a pass into the hills, seven cosses from the capital. There fees are levied from such of the Lohání merchants who select that route. Its walls are said to be very lofty, and had a most singular appearance when seen at a distance; but I am not certain that the miraj, which is constant here, did not produce the effect. In walking from Darraband to Ták I could have almost fancied that I was tra-

velling in fairyland, from the fantastic character of the landscape, owing to this phenomenon. In the immediate vicinity of Ták villages are numerous. About Kúndí, the frontier post on the north, towards Bannú, they occur less frequently, and thence to the hills the space is uninhabited, and broken up by ravines.

Ták is insalubrious, particularly to strangers, the water with which it is supplied being supposed pernicious and impure. The nawâb and his family make use of that derived from a stream about two cosses distant, which is good and wholesome. The insalubrity of Ták may be accounted for by the extreme heat, and by its locality, as well as from the quality of its water. The common fruit-trees, called bér, are spread over the country, and distinguish all the villages.

I had no sooner reached Ták than my presence was reported to the nawâb, and by his orders, or those of his son Alladád, I was accommodated within the citadel, and informed, that during the day I should not be interrupted, but that on the morrow I should have an audience of the nawâb, which I was glad to hear, having been told so much about him, and that he did not generally receive visitors.

Early the next morning I was called to attend upon the old chief, and after being conducted through many gates and passages, was brought into a garden, sufficiently attractive to claim all my atten-

tion, and to fill my mind with astonishment at beholding so perfect a display in so obscure a part of the world. The flowers of a thousand hues, the lakes, whose bosoms reflected the image of the orange and pomegranate-trees, with their glowing fruits waving on their margins, and on whose tranquil waters were floating hundreds of white geese, were objects so unexpected and delighful that I could not but pay homage to the taste of Sirwar Khân; and there needed but the presence of the ripened beauties of the harem to have presented a complete picture of eastern magnificence. In unison with the splendid scene, was the costly decorated apartment of the nawâb, into which I was ushered, and found him seated with his three sons. On the right side were about a dozen attendants, kneeling, with their firelocks in their hands. He was corpulent, and his countenance bore the impress of that energy for which his subjects and neighbours give him credit. To me he was courteous; and, amongst other things, inquired if it were true that London had a bazar three hundred cosses in length, telling his sons that one Máhomed Khân had told him so. Alladád Khân was by no means well dressed, neither was the second son, but the youngest, Sáhibdád, who was a very handsome youth, and probably therefore the favourite, was superbly attired. Sirwar Khân expressed pleasure at seeing me, and said I was at liberty to continue his guest as long as I pleased. When I rose to leave,

Alladád whispered to a person to lead me to his darbár, and thither I went and waited a short time for him. When he rejoined me, his object proved to be to show me a gun he had lately cast, and a number of gun-carriages in preparation. I discovered that he had acquired the art of casting cannon, and that he was a very good carpenter, for certainly his workshops did him no little credit. He was wonderfully civil, bade me enjoy myself at Ták; and we parted.

I found that my journey to Ták was not likely to increase my chances of making my way to Kâbal, for I could gain no information on which I could act, and when I mentioned the subject to Alladád Khân, he told me, if I stayed a year with him, he would then give me trustworthy companions, and guarantee my arrival at Kândahár. To this proposal I would not consent, but he was in no wise offended at my refusal. One evening he returned home so inebriated that it was necessary to hold him on his horse. He was attended by a numerous cavalcade, and passing my apartments, happened to think of me, and sent for me. He insisted that I should take a cup with him, and called to his people to produce the flagons, which were concealed beneath their cloaks. An objection was started, that it was not right I should use the same cup as the khân, on the plea of my being no Mussulman, but he would not admit it. He then made me accompany him to his quarters; and on the road, as he held my hand, and I

was on foot, I was in no small dread of being trampled on by his horse's hoofs. There was, luckily, not far to go, and when we gained his apartments the crowd was dismissed, and only two or three persons, with his musicians, remained. He was very elate, and much pressed me to remain with him, to make, as he said, shells, and cross the river, and attack the Síkhs. He then produced some pictures, and afterwards sang songs from Hafiz, but for a short time; as his renewed potations disqualified him, and he became insensible. Another evening I was sent for to a fáquír's takkía, or shrine, without the town, where, it seemed, that the khân had a party, but it fortunately happened, before I reached, he had fallen, overpowered, and the riotous assembly had broken up.

While I was a guest here, Immat Khân, a vakíl from the court of Mír Rústam, of Khairpúr in Upper Sind, arrived. It appeared, the object of his mission was of no higher importance than to procure a few hawks and camels, but the ceremony of his introduction gave me an opportunity of witnessing how such matters were arranged, as Alladád Khân invited me to be present. It took place in the darbár room, a spacious apartment, around which were seated files of matchlock-men, with their pieces in their hands. At the upper part the officers and others were duly arranged, and a seat was provided me on the left of the khân, who entered after the

preliminary dispositions had been completed. He was followed by the vakíl, who was embraced by Alladád, and seated on his right hand. A package was deposited in front of the chief, consisting of the presents sent by Mír Rústam. It was opened, and a letter taken therefrom, which was read by Alladád, and drew from him many protestations of respect and friendship for the rulers of Sind. The presents were ordinary shawls, muslins, kimkâbs, pieces of chintz, &c. I was introduced to the vákil as being a Feringhí, or European. He seemed very astonished, and no doubt marvelled what could have brought me there. During the conference the musicians exercised their skill, and in very good taste, as they did not allow their instruments to drown the conversation. The shâhghâssís, or masters of ceremony, had been busy in arranging the visitors; now, on their departure they were careful to announce, in loud and pompous tones, their names, family, and rank. Alladád Khân was well dressed on this occasion, and his attendants obsequiously fanned him with bunches of peacocks' feathers. He sat with the vakíl until the room was cleared, when they again embraced, and the introduction terminated.

I found at Ták the party of Síkh horsemen deputed by Harí Singh to receive a sum of tribute money from the nawâb. They were in no respect so boisterous as their countrymen at Déra; apparently, in so retired a place and so near the hills, deeming

it prudent to be quiet. Their claim was admitted, and they were entertained by the nawâb, but the townspeople were prohibited to hold communication with them.

The Nawâb Sirwar Khân seldom left his citadel but on hunting excursions, when he would be attended by an escort of about one hundred and fifty horse. When he left, and when he re-entered its walls, a piece of artillery was discharged. He has a great notion of the superiority of agricultural over commercial pursuits, and an anecdote is related of his practical mode of proving his argument, which may be cited. In conversation with a Lohání on his favourite theme, he directed an ear of wheat to be brought, which he rubbed between his hands, and then counted the grains. He observed that the Lohání travelled to Delhí and Juânpúr, amid scorching heat and privations of every kind, and if on his return home he had made one rupee two rupees, he gave his turban an extra hitch, thrust his hands into his ribs, and conceited himself a great man. "I," said Sirwar, "remain quietly at home with my family; for one grain of wheat put into the earth I receive forty—or for one rupee I obtain forty rupees. Is my traffic or yours the better one?"

I was beginning to be weary of my stay at Ták, when I accidentally saw a fáquír, who, learning that I wished to go to Kâbal, proffered to put me in

the way of doing so. I liked the appearance of the man, and my acquaintance telling me I might confide in him, I immediately made up my mind to accompany him, and left Ták with him the same evening, hardly knowing whither he would take me, but trusting all was right.

CHAPTER V.

My companion's tale.—Máhomed Rezza.—Month of Ramazân.—The fáquír's brother.—Incident.—Deputation from Déra.—Cross the Indus.—Bakkar.—Múr Singh.—Lashkar Khân.—Take leave of Múr Singh.—Depart for Kúndí.—Insufficient guide.—Reception at a gharrí.—Return.—Meeting with Loháni merchants.—Their inquiries.—Regain Déra.—Departure for Darraband.—Encounter with peasants.—Find a companion.—Reach Gandapúr.—District of Darraband.—The Lohánís.—Town of Darraband.—Departure for Ták.—Incident in route.—Kalaichí—Mozafar Khân—his troops &c.—Meeting with Vazírís.—Accompany them to the hills.—Return with them.—Regain Ták.

My strange friend and guide led me over the country, without troubling himself about a path, pleading the privilege and nonchalance of a fáquír; and I was well tired before, late at night, we reached an assemblage of tents, where I was pleased to find my companion well known. We were very well received and entertained, but the people strove to persuade the fáquír that he did wrong to encumber himself with me.

The next morning we again traversed the country, with the same disregard to the mediums of civilization, and at evening gained a village near Kúyah, where we passed the night. My companion had informed me *en route* that he was a hâjí, and but

a dependent on a more important personage, the Fáquír Máhomed Rezza, whom he described as wealthy and influential, being the pír of a large portion of the Loháni tribes. The pír would, in the course of a month, proceed to Khorasân by the Gomal route, and the hâjí felt certain that he would gladly take charge of me throughout the journey. He farther explained, that he had been deputed on a mission to Sirwar Khân, who had promised to send a horse to his master, being willing by such an offering to secure the benefit of his prayers and benedictions.

Leaving the village, a short march of three or four miles brought us to another circle of black tents, where resided the Fáquír Máhomed Rezza. He was no sooner apprised of my arrival than he came to welcome me, and the cordiality of his reception fully justified the anticipations of the hâjí. He engaged to conduct me to his home at Shilghar, when, after resting his cattle a few days, he would take me to Kâbal, and place my hand in that of Dost Máhomed Khân. Máhomed Rezza was a man of tall stature, and rude in appearance, but of considerable suavity of manner. He was held in unbounded veneration by his countrymen and dependents, who, while they vaunted his wealth, were no less eager to extol his liberality. Generally, in the morning a carpet would be spread for him on the ground without his circle of tents, where he would seat himself, the company being arranged

around him, and write tavézes, breathe on beads, or strings of thread, whose virtues seemed to require frequent renewal. A youth would sometimes be brought forward, who, commencing by sobbing, gradually worked himself into the most hideous convulsions, when the pious man would clasp him in his arms, and the evil spirit, or other exciting cause, would be instantly hushed. Such exhibitions were conducted with perfect solemnity; and, although I managed to preserve gravity, I fancied, as I caught the fáquír's eye directed towards me, that he hardly expected I should be so credulous as the crowd about him.

The month of Rámazân came on, observed rigidly by all good Máhomedans as a fast; and as we were to start for Khorasân after the celebration of the íd, or festival, at its close the fáquír left for some days, to settle business he had in the country, probably the collection of offerings from his disciples. Before going, he sent for me, and calling his younger brother, told me, in his absence to consider him as my slave, and to beat him at discretion. While he was talking, a child from the tents came to say my breakfast was ready. I was not asked to fast, and the brother hastened to bring it. He returned with some very nice cakes and butter, when the fáquír gave him a terrible slap on the cheek, as it proved, because he had not brought sugar. I pitied the young man, but could not help the accident, and received additional authority to use him as a

slave, and to beat and kick him as I pleased. It may be gleaned from this anecdote that the situation of dependent relatives is not very enviable in Máhomedan families; indeed, it is one reproach of their social system that they are treated as menials.

On another day during this month, I had strolled to a neighbouring fixed village, where was a grove of bér-trees. I endeavoured to bring down some of the fruit by casting sticks and stones, when a woman, observing me, pulled a stout stick from a hedge, and without mercy employed it upon me, reviling me as an infidel for breaking my fast. Expostulation seemed but to increase her fury, and I was perplexed how to act, for it was awkward to return violence, when saying, "Why be angry? I am a Feringhí," she dropped her weapon, expressed great sorrow at her mistake, and helped me to bring down the fruit, at which she was much more expert than I had been. We were living within six or seven miles of Déra Ismael Khân, and one day being near the high road, I met the nawâb, who was returning from a hunting excursion. He was civil, and I told him I was going to Khorasân with the fáquír. Whether he mentioned the circumstance I know not, but it became known at Déra that I was residing near at hand, and a deputation came to me, praying me to give up the idea of the penible route by the Gomal river, and to take the easier and safer one of Peshawer, in which my Síkh acquaintance offered to assist me, if I would cross the river, and

go up its eastern bank within their territory. I refused, but my Déra friends returned the following day, and were so earnest in their arguments that I consented, and accompanied them back to the town, where I passed the night at the Síkh quarters.

The next morning I crossed the Indus, attended with a Síkh, Júár Singh, and after passing the sands and marshy land immediately skirting the stream, entered upon a fine rich country, covered with villages and cultivation. This tract, seated between the river and the desert on the east, formerly belonged to the family of the nawâb of Déra Ismael Khân, but its fertility, and the expediency of bringing their frontiers to the Indus, were sufficient motives for its occupation by the Síkhs. Leaving village after village behind us, we reached the larger town of Bakkar with a handsome kiln-burnt brick fortress. There I was introduced to the killádar, a well-dressed Síkh, who regretted we passed so speedily, as he was willing to have given me an entertainment. We finally gained Béla, where I found another Síkh, Múr Singh, the chief of one hundred men, who civilly welcomed me, and I became his guest for a few days. My course, so far from being to the north or towards Peshâwer, had been to the south, or from it, but Júár Singh, my companion, was attached to the party of Múr Singh, who, it was arranged, should send me, in good hands, to Kúndí, the present head-quarters of Sirdár Harí Singh, whence I could easily make my way to

Peshâwer, either by following the course of the river to Atak, or by crossing it to Kâlabâgh. The delay in gaining my object was, perhaps, compensated by the pleasure of surveying a beautiful and luxuriant country, and it was a great satisfaction to escape the heat of the day in the shade of the groves and gardens, which here accompany and embellish the towns and villages. Múr Singh was a venerable aged Síkh, of truly patriarchal aspect. I passed a few days very agreeably with him at Béla, which forms part of his jághír. I was well pleased also with the Síkhs generally, and could grant that in many points they have the advantage over the Máhomedans, particularly in cleanliness, for it was rare indeed to see one of them deficient in this respect, whereas the Máhomedan would seem, from principle, to be careless in his apparel. In this part of the country I became acquainted with Lashkar Khân, formerly of more importance, but now a servant of the Máhárájá Ranjit Singh. He entreated me, as a favour, to write something in his book, that he might show to any other European he might chance to meet.

Múr Singh at length announced that he was prepared to expedite me towards Kúndí, and that he proposed I should accompany Bowání Dâs, a Hindú Díwân of the Sirdá Harí Singh, who was about to return to his master to account for the collection of moneys he had made. The old chief took leave of me very kindly, asked me if I was satisfied with

him, and many times entreated me to accept money, clothes, and anything I needed. I declined his offers, and we parted.

We returned by the same road we had come, repassing Bakkar. I happened, with my attendant, to miss Bowání Dâs, who stayed at some village where accounts were to be settled, and which perhaps he had not expected. At the village where we had preceded him we had therefore to wait three or four days, until he joined us. When he did so, I found he was very far from having settled his collections, and I intimated my desire to proceed at once; to which he assented, and gave me a person, but an insufficient one, as I afterwards found, to accompany me to Kúndí, which I understood to be forty cosses distant from our position.

We started, however, and made a long march of twenty cosses, much of it over the desert, which was succeeded by a fertile and populous tract, over which were dispersed groves of a species of tree new to me, and resembling aspens. Síkhs were located in most of the villages, and I met with many interruptions from them, from which I had been secured if Bowání Dâs had given me a competent companion. He turned out to be a weaver, and employed by the Díwân contrary to his will—while weavers, it seems, in these parts, for some reason or other, are but little regarded. At night we reached a well-built gharri, surrounded with a trench, but my arrival exceedingly terrified the

killadár, or he affected to be so, and closed his gates, as if he expected attack. About two hours elapsed, when, finding I was very quiet, some Hindústání soldiers ventured to leave the fort and approach me. I explained, that I was proceeding to Harí Singh's camp, and that there was slight cause for alarm, when they returned to the killadár, and presently again came, saying, he wished to provide me with supper; which I refused.

In the morning, considering the nature of my adventures the past day, and the inefficiency of my guide, which would expose me to fresh ones if I proceeded, I decided to retrace my steps while I had the power, and to rejoin Bowání Dâs. I accordingly returned, but not exactly by the same road, in this instance avoiding the desert, or only skirting its edges. At evening we reached a large village, where was a Síkh party, hardly disposed to be civil, but I fell in with two Lohání merchants, who the moment they recognized me to be a Feringhí, invited me to their lodgings, and to be their guest. These men had travelled in India, vending their fruits and horses, and were consequently in some degree cognizant of Europeans. They were loud in their eulogiums of European justice and liberality, and professed themselves happy to be friendly to any one of the nation they met with. They informed me, that they had sold mares to Fatí Singh Alúawâla, that he had given them an order on the village, which is held by him, for the money,

and that they were awaiting its receipt. These men entertained me very bounteously, and were very anxious that I should explain what my countrymen did with dog's heads, as they had observed in India that men killed those animals for the sake of selling their heads to the gentlemen. I could not conceive to what they alluded, and they suggested the heads might be used to make medicine, and slily asserted they could not be intended for food.

I could neither solve the mystery nor satisfy them that I did not conceal my knowledge from them. On subsequently thinking what fact could have made so great an impression on the imaginations of these Lohánís, I recollected the practice of shooting stray dogs in military stations during certain seasons, under the apprehension they may be mad, or become so. The same men had noticed the practice of firing at military funerals, and gravely asked whether it was not meant as a menace to heaven if the souls of the interred were not received.

The next day I found Bowání Dâs at the village where I had left him, and making over his weaver guide to him, I recrossed the river and regained Déra.

I now determined to proceed straight to the hills, taking a break in them which had been always pointed out to me as denoting the pass of Darraband as my point of direction. I was in

hopes of again meeting the Fáquír Máhomed Rezza, although a little more than a month might have elapsed since I had left his tents. I started before sunrise, and the morning was cool and agreeable. I struck over the country, having learned from my friend the Hâjí to despise paths, and walked in high spirits. There is little jangal near Déra, and the few karíta bushes sprinkled over the plain were now laden with their beautiful red flowers. This delightful scenery did not, however, last long, and I came upon a naked surface, with scarcely a plant or shrub to diversify it, while the heat grew intense, as it always does in this country soon after sunrise. Still I did not relax in my pace, and had made considerable way when I was tempted to strike for two or three bushes, larger than usual, where, to my satisfaction I found as I had barely expected but yet wished, a small pool of water. It was very muddy, but palatable. I had walked much farther on, when I descried in the distance two youths, and some camels browsing. I made towards them; and as I neared them they were evidently surprised both at my presence and appearance. The younger was inclined to run, but the elder stayed him, and awaited me. I could not very well understand them, but saw that my colour was the cause of terror. The younger lad seemed to think I was a dév, and would by no means approach me, although assured by the other that I was only a man, and there

was no reason to fear. The latter asked me to extend my arm, and, as I thought he did so with a view of assuring his companion, I complied, when he seized my wrist, and wrenching it round, brought me, without power of resistance, to the ground. He called upon his friend to come and examine the bundle I carried on my back, but no persuasion could remove the fear of the lad, and he kept aloof. The fellow wrenched my wrist more and more, until I roared out that I was the nawâb's núkar, or servant; at which he suddenly relinquished his hold and retired, allowing me to recover my feet. Seeing the mention of the nawâb terrified him, I denounced all vengeance on him, when he pointed to his camels, and asked me if I would drink some milk. I asked whether he had a píála, or bowl, and found that he intended to milk into my hands, which I declined, as I should have placed myself in a position which might have disposed him to take another advantage. I had not gone much farther, when a little jangal occurred, and I presently came to a village, which I had understood I should find on my road, and which was satisfactory, as proving I had not deviated from the right course. I did not halt at it, and again came upon a level surface, which I traversed until evening, without meeting any one, or seeing a vestige of habitation. I was still walking, when I perceived, at a great distance, a man walking, and obviously armed. He was crossing

my route, yet I made towards him, and ultimately approached without his ever having noticed me. I startled him when I accosted him with "Salám Alíkám," but he speedily recovered his surprise, and returned my salutation. I found that he was a stranger, and although going to some village, scarcely knew if he was in the road for it; therefore, as we were both in the same predicament, we readily agreed to seek it together. I told him at once that I was a Feringhí, which did not affect his civility. We came upon the nest of some large fowl, in which were two or three eggs. My companion took up one of them, regarded it attentively, uttered some pious exclamations, and then carefully replaced it. On reaching a group of tall trees he ascended one of them, to ascertain if the village he sought was in view, which we did not reach until dark. He had an acquaintance there, at whose house we were both accommodated for the night.

In the morning I accompanied two Lohánís, who were going to Gandapúr, which we reached after a short but difficult march. Here resides Omar Khân, a chief, of Lohání descent. His revenue is about sixty thousand rupees, of which he pays twenty thousand to the nawâb of Déra. The ancient capital of the district is Darraband, romantically situated on the elevated bank of a hill-stream. The villages belonging to Omar Khân are thirteen in number. These would not supply

his revenue, sixty thousand rupees; but the greater portion is derived from the Loháni tribes, who annually visit, and remain in this part of the country during the cold season. They settle, more or less, along the tract west of the Indus, and between the river and the hills. In Darraband they are particularly numerous, and, as in other places, pay a certain sum for the sufferance of settlement, and for the privilege of grazing their camels. In this district, at the opening of spring, the various tribes assemble; their traders, who have dispersed over the Panjâb and India, return; when, in collective bodies, they proceed through the district of Ták, and paying an impost to its chief at the fortress of Darbarra, they enter the hills, and, forcing a passage through the Vazírí hordes infesting them, proceed towards Khorasân. The merchants then spread themselves over the contiguous regions, even to Bokhára, disposing of their merchandize and wares, and purchasing horses, fruits, and dye-stuffs, for the ventures of the ensuing year. Omar Khân retains in pay one hundred and eighty foot soldiers.

The Lohánís conducted me to their khél, or collection of tents, where I was well received, but learned, to my regret, that Máhomed Rezza had departed some days before. A wealthy merchant, Jehân Khân, took charge of my entertainment, and I remained a few days at Gandapúr; but finding there was little chance of the speedy

march of the party, as it was awaiting some of its friends from Hindústân, I proceeded to Darraband, about three or four cosses distant, which I was anxious to see. This town has a small bazar, and there are some large old houses, but deserted and in decay, their ancient Hindú owners having fled. The water of the hill rivulet is reputed unwholesome, and the inhabitants supply themselves from a small canal, flowing north of the town. The neighbourhood is agreeable, and the heat, although severe, did not seem to me so oppressive as at Déra. The hills are about two cosses distant, ravines and broken ground filling the intervening space. In the garden of Omar Khân are a few vines and fig-trees, and small inferior apples are produced in some of the adjacent villages. The cultivation, which is principally wheat, is generally remote from the villages; and at the harvest season the inhabitants abandon their dwellings until their crops are collected. At such times there is considerable danger from the Vazíris, which term here seems given to all the hill tribes, who descend and murder as well as plunder. Darraband has been frequently visited by these marauders. During my stay here every one slept on the roofs of the houses, as a precautionary measure, taking care to draw the ladders, by which they ascended, up after them.

Músa Khân, an inhabitant of Darraband, received me at his house, and I sojourned a few days

under his roof; but hearing no tidings of the approach of the Lohání merchants, I resolved again to proceed to Ták, if with no other object, that I might see the intermediate country, having found it was quite practicable to move freely about. My route skirted the hills, and I found villages at four, five, and six cosses distance from each other. I was always welcomed, but at one of them I was told that God must be with me or I could never have reached it, as no man of the place would have ventured to march as I had done, alone, from fear of the Vazírís. The road to this particular village had been very lonely, leading over deep ravines and chasms, covered with long thick grass and jangals. I felt no apprehension from men as I journeyed along it, but sometimes ruminated on the dilemma I should be in if I encountered wild boars, and other ferocious animals, which I knew were numerous enough. At another village I was requested by a young man to give him a charm to secure the affections of a fair maid of whom he was enamoured; or, as he expressed it, to compel her to follow him like a dog. I found it necessary to write something on a paper to satisfy him, with which he was so well pleased, that he was not only very obliging while I stayed, but accompanied me two or three miles on the road when I left.

I at length reached a village dependent on Kalaichí, a small district situate between the lands

of Darraband and Ták, and governed by a chief, Mozafar Khân. The town of Kalaichí was about six cosses to the north, and I had some desire to have visited it, but circumstances prevented. It is said to be commercial, and to have a large bazar, and that commodities bear more reasonable prices there than at Déra. The revenue of Mozafar Khân is reckoned at eighty thousand rupees, of which twenty thousand are paid to the nawâb of Déra. In an expedition against Marwat, set on foot from Déra, at the instigation of the Síkhs, he attended with a quota of seven hundred men. He can hardly, however, retain in pay so great a number, and probably drew out on the occasion the strength of his country, in which the proprietors of lands hold them on conditions of military service. Moreover, it must be remembered, that the men of these countries consider themselves the servants of their respective princes, and, from their warlike dispositions, are easily assembled. The district of Kalaichí does not include a great number of villages, the eastern portion of it being scantily supplied with water, and the western portion, extending to the hills, consisting of ravines and thick jangal, besides being liable to the incursions of the Vazírí robbers. Wild hogs abound in the jangals, and their chase is the chief pastime of the khân. Melons, common in all these countries, are particularly fine at Kalaichí.

Early one morning I reached a village, where I found a large party of men seated on chahárpâhís, or cots, and apparently strangers. I joined them, and although I could not understand the dialect they spoke, they invited me to sit down, and handed to me some fragments of cakes, on which they had just made a repast. One of them, who spoke Hindústání, addressed me, and took away the fragments of cakes placed before me, telling his companions, as I could comprehend, that such fare was not proper for me, who was a Feringhí. The consequence was, that fresh cakes were prepared, and served, with the addition of butter and sugar. Many of the party were disposed to be merry, and made motions as if cutting a man's throat, and shooting with arrows, at which I had only to laugh as they did themselves. The man who spoke Hindústání seemed a busy personage amongst them, and was continually on the move; therefore I saw little of him; but when they prepared to depart,—and some of them I could make out, asked me to accompany them,—I desired him to tell me who they were, and where they were going. He replied that they lived in the hills, but would return to the village. I had some inclination to go with them, which increased when I saw their appearance when mounted, for I found all of them had a kind of frock, or surtout of red quilted linen, lined with yellow, and being armed only with lances, swords, and

shields, the effect was far from bad, and I wondered where such people could come from. I mixed in, therefore, with the few people on foot, and we had a most fatiguing march amongst the hills until evening, when we halted at a spot where there was a rivulet. There we remained, most of the party separating, and passed the next day. A chahárpâhí had been brought, and placed under a projecting rock for one of them, and excellent cakes and butter were produced, so that habitations were probably near, but I saw none of them. As the sun became perpendicular I complained of the heat, and the person who had the chahárpâhí resigned it to me, and I was left alone. The next morning I was beckoned to rise, and I found we were to return, which we did, and regained the village we had started from. I had before noticed how attentive were the villagers to these men, and now they supplied chahárpâhís with great alacrity. They were not, however, long needed, for the party making a short halt, started for Kalaichí, leaving me to resume my journey towards Ták. When they had gone, the villagers told me they were thieves and Vazíris, so their civility proceeded from dread. They further informed me, that some days ago, a party of them had endeavoured to intercept Mozafar Khân on a hunting excursion, but that the collision had proved unfortunate to them, the khân having made two or three of their number prisoners. The men I had seen were on a mission to recover their

companions who were detained at Kalaichí. The villagers inquired, how I, a man of sense, could have accompanied them into the hills, and I told them that my sense instructed me that they would not harm me, and therefore I accompanied them.

I remained the day at this village, and the next morning entered the district dependent on Ták, here I proceeded from village to village and again found myself in the capital of Sirwar Khân, although I did not make my arrival known to him, or to his son Alladád Khân, as I purposed to make no stay.

CHAPTER VI.

Remarks.—Different routes.—Leave Ták.—Reception at village.—Incident.—Attempt at plunder.—Saiyad of Peshâwer.—Kúndí.—The governor.—Alarm.—Hills of Marwat.—Fine view.—The Seféd Koh. — Village of Marwat. — Construction of houses. — Good reception.—Lakkí.—Robbers.—Naggar.—The Malek—his behaviour. — Dispute. — Cordiality of the people. — State of society. — Civility of Malek.— He wishes me to stay.—Fracas.—Mír Kamaradín's agents.—Opportunity lost.—Political relations of Marwat.— Cultivation, &c. — Character of people. —State of authority.—Advantages of Bannú.—Postures.—Costume.—Love of country. — Government. — Adapted to state of society. — Former state of Bannú. — Vestiges of ancient prosperity. — Manufactures.—Máhárájá Ranjit Singh.

I HAD now become so completely satisfied that I could freely range amongst the rude tribes and people of this part of the country, that I was careless about seeking for companions. I had, moreover, found that there was no necessity to conceal that I was a Feringhí, but that, on the contrary, the avowal procured me better treatment. The inhabitants of the villages were orderly and peaceable, while they made it a duty to relieve the wants of the stranger and traveller. Amongst them there was no danger to be apprehended, and any little interruption occurring, was from the accidental encounter of individuals on the road. I therefore now made

inquiries at Ták merely as to the several routes by which I might reach Pesháwer; and from what I heard of that of Bannú, I inclined to take it, notwithstanding the dangers pointed out, as I had learned to appreciate them, and had acquired confidence, which alone greatly lessens them.

The usual route from this part of the country to Pesháwer leads along the banks of the Indus to Kâla Bâgh, famous for its salt mountains, and thence by Shakr Darra to Kohât, in Bangash. I had been recommended to follow this route, both that it was considered the safer, and that it was likely I should receive every assistance from Ahmed Khân, the chief of Isá Khél, a town on the road south of Kâla Bâgh, who had so great a predilection for Feringhís, that the fame thereof was bruited throughout the country. As Mr. Elphinstone's mission in 1809 had traversed this route, I decided to follow the unfrequented one of Marwat and Bannú.

Such is the reputation of the Patáns inhabiting these countries, that fáquírs or mendicants are deterred from entering them. Placing my trust in Divine Providence, I resolved to commit myself amongst them, and accordingly one evening I turned my back upon the town of Ták, and, alone, took the road. A northernly course of some five or six miles brought me near a village, when the clouds gathered and threatened rain. I seated myself under a karíta bush while the shower fell, which

continued until the approach of night. I then left my quarters and entered the village to find out a place of shelter and repose. I found a company of individuals, seated in a small hut, or shed. One of them conversed with me, and questioned me as to my country and religion. On being answered, an European and Christian, he informed his companions that Házarat Isá, or our Saviour, was an assíl or genuine Patán. This agreeable communication ensured for me a hearty reception, and excited a little curiosity, to gratify which a fire was kindled that my features might be the better observed. The best entertainment the village afforded was produced, and in such quantities that I was compelled to cry quarter. The assertor of our Saviour's Patán lineage, who proved to be a Saiyad, made himself particularly busy, and provided me with a snug place to sleep in, and plenty of warm clothing.

In the morning, a march of four or five cosses cleared me of the villages of Ták, and I moved direct across the country, towards a break in the encircling hills, through which I was given to understand the road led to Marwat.

On reaching a cultivated spot, without habitations, but where some people were engaged in reaping the corn, I inquired of them as to the road. They strongly urged me not to venture alone, for I should infallibly be murdered. Their representations were so forcible, and so earnestly made, that I was in-

duced to take their advice, and turned off in a western direction, with the view of gaining a small town and fort, called Kúndí, which they had designated, and where, as the high road led from it to Marwat, it was possible I might find companions for the journey. In my progress to this place I encountered a man, who drew his sword, and was about to sacrifice me as an infidel Síkh. I had barely the time to apprise him that I was a Feringhí, when he instantly sheathed his weapon, and, placing his arm around my waist in a friendly mode, conducted me to a village near at hand, where I was hospitably entertained. I here learned that Kúndí was a coss distant, and therefore resumed my route. As I approached it an old man, tending goats, seized a small bundle I carried. I expostulated with him as well as I could, and prayed him not to compel me to employ force to make him let go his hold, assuring him at the same time that I did not intend he should make the bundle booty; but he seemed obstinate in his design. He had merely a stick, and I could easily have vanquished him; but shame deterred me from striking so aged and enfeebled a being. Other persons made their appearance, and obviated the necessity of contest. They asked who I was, and on my replying a Feringhí, they pushed the old man away, and rebuked him for his audacity. He swore on his faith as a Músulmân, that he had not intended robbery, and that he supposed I was a Hindú. I was led into the

village, and regaled with bread and buttermilk. I was here informed, to my great satisfaction, that a party was then in the village that would proceed in the morning by the route I intended to follow; its destination being Peshâwer. I found the party to consist of a Saiyad of Peshâwer, and his attendants, with a múnshí of Sirwar Khân, the chief of Ták, who had, besides other articles, two fine camels in charge, as presents to Súltân Máhomed Khân, one of the Peshâwer sirdárs. I had heard of this Saiyad at Ták, but understood that he was on a mission from Ahmed Shâh, the pretended champion of Islám, in the Yusef Zai country, and that his object was to procure funds from old Sirwar in aid of the good cause. I now became instructed that he was an agent of Súltân Máhomed Khân, which did not, however, militate against his using his exertions to advance the pugnacious Saiyad's views, although in doing so he was consulting neither the wishes nor advantage of his liege lord and master. The great, in these countries, are but indifferently served.

On paying my respects to the Saiyad, I was most civilly received, and assured of assistance and protection during the journey. I esteemed my fortune great in meeting with this man, as in his society all doubts and misgivings as to the perils of the route vanished. Kúndí had a fort, the residence of Ahmed Khân, the governor, a respectable man, who might be allowed to be, what he himself told

the Saiyad he was, a good Patán, and a faithful vassal of Sirwar Khân. He had a garrison of one hundred men, Kúndí being a frontier post on the Bannú side. We had an opportunity of observing it was necessary; for towards evening the alarm was beat, and the soldiers hastened to the plain, the marauders of Bannú having issued from their hills and approached the place. They, however, retired, and Ahmed Khân, before re-entering his fort, exercised his few mounted attendants in firing their matchlocks, and in practice with their lances. The greater part of his soldiers were on foot, men of small stature, and clothed in black or dark dresses. They were Rohillas, or Afghân mountaineers. We were provided with a repast of fowls in the evening, Ahmed Khân having received the party as guests; and early on the next morning we started, accompanied by a guide, for Marwat.

A march of about seven cosses, the road tolerably good, brought us to the mouth of the pass through the hills; when our guide solicited his dismissal, urging his fear to attend us farther. The passage through these hills, which are of small elevation, was generally wide and convenient. About midway were a number of natural wells, or cavities in the rocks, where numbers of people, men and women, were busy in filling their massaks, or skins, with water. These they transport on asses and bullocks. They had come hither from a distance of five and six cosses, belonging to the villages on

the plain of Marwat. The water may be good and wholesome, but was unpalatable, having been strongly imbued with a flavour from the numerous skins continually plunged into it. A woman recognized me to be a Feringhí from the cap I wore;—the recognition was productive only of a little innocent mirth.

On gaining the ascent of the last hill in this small range of elevations, on which was an extensive burial place, the plains of Marwat and Bannú burst upon the sight. The numerous villages, marked by their several groups of trees, the yellow tints of the ripe corn-fields, and the fantastic forms of the surrounding mountains, presented, in their union and contrast, a splendid scene. In front and to the west, the distant ranges exhibited a glorious spectacle, from their pure whiteness, diversified by streaks of azure, red and pearly grey. These beautiful and commanding features of the landscape were enhanced by the charm of an unclouded sky. I was lost in wonder and rapture on contemplating this serene yet gorgeous display of nature, and awoke from my reverie but to lament that the villany of man should make a hell where the Creator had designed a paradise,—a train of thought forced upon my mind when I thought of the lawless tribes who dwell in, or wander over these delightful scenes.

The distant hills, which here appeared to so much advantage, were, I presume, the snowy range of

Seféd Koh, which separates Khúram, or the country of the Jájís and Túris, from the valleys of Jellálabád, together with the variously coloured hills, which stretch westward from Kâla Bâgh, and in which the salt-mines are found.

Three or four cosses brought us to the first of the villages on the plain, which we passed, and then successively several others. In this part of our route I went to some reapers, at a little distance from the road, to ask for water. On learning that I was a Feringhí, they put themselves to the trouble of fetching some, which was cool, and had been lying in the shade. At length we entered a village, where we found the people in a group, sitting on a prepared mound of earth, raised close to the masjít, or place of prayers, engaged in discourse, and smoking the chillam. Similar mounds are found in all the villages of Marwat, and appropriated to the same social purposes, while they have the same location, viz. near to the masjíts. Our Saiyad explained to the assembly the objects of his journey, which had made him their visitor; and buttermilk was brought for the party. The houses were neatly constructed, principally of reeds, the climate and lack of rain rendering more substantial dwellings unnecessary. In this, as in every other village, were two or three Hindú banyas. A farther march of two cosses, during which we passed a large pond of muddy rain-water, brought us to a village, where we

halted to escape the heat of the day, which had become very oppressive.

I was here well received, and attracted much notice. I was lodged in the masjít by myself, my friends of the party being elsewhere accommodated. This erection was neatly and commodiously built on an elevation; a chahárpáhí, or cot, was furnished me to repose upon, and large supplies of bread and milk were brought for my repast. Moreover, the village barber was produced, and cut the nails of my fingers and toes, which were deemed to require an operation; and my friends of the village continued their various attentions, shampooing me against my will, but convinced I must like what they liked themselves, until I signified my wish to take a little rest.

In the afternoon we left this village for Lakkí, a town distant about six cosses, to which the plain gradually descends, the river of Khúram flowing in the hollow. A little beyond the village we descended into an enormous ravine, of great depth; in crossing it, so intense was the heat that perspiration was copiously excited. This fracture appeared to extend across the country from east to west. In the evening we arrived at Lakkí; two or three villages, with much cultivation, stretching to the left. This is a town with pretty good bazar, and is seated on the river of Khúram, a fine stream. It may be said to be defenceless; the residence of the chief

authority, here called the malek, although styled the killa, or fort, not meriting that appellation.

Our party was entertained by the malek, and we supped on fowls and pillau. In the morning we were allowed a mounted guide, armed with sword and spear, to conduct us to the villages of Bânnú. Crossing the river, which at this season of the year (I believe about the month of May) was but knee-deep, we ascended the gentle rise of the opposite plain, on which was seated a village. Our Saiyad did not think prudent to enter it, but the guide went there to obtain some information relative to our route, before we attempted it. The result being, I presume, satisfactory, we started across a barren, uninhabited plain, in extent about ten cosses, and chequered occasionally with small stunted bushes and dwarf trees, mostly mimosas. In one spot were two or three holes, containing muddy water, sufficient to allay the thirst of the casual passenger, but not adequate to supply the wants of large parties. Passing a large burial ground, we neared the villages of Bannú. On reaching a place where we found deposits of muddy rain-water, we fell in with six or seven robbers, armed to the teeth. They did not, however, attack us, although on the look out for spoil, the party being protected by the sanctity of the Saiyad, whose holy character was made known to them. They were also told that I was a Feringhí; and as I was about helping myself to water from the deposit near to which they were

standing, they obligingly pointed out another place, where the water was clearer or less muddy. From this spot the surface of the plain was a little more wooded, but still slightly. On our road we met a man with an axe in his hand, who, on being told of the party we had just left at the water, retraced his steps; he was very thankful for the information, and said that he should have lost his axe. Where the plain ceased, we again crossed the river of Khúram. Its course was here rapid and over a stony bed, but the depth was shallow. We then came upon cultivated ground, and the villages and castles. As we passed by these, the inhabitants, who were generally sitting outside the gates, would rise and pay their respects and salutations, judging, from the demure aspect of the Saiyad, as well as from his white turban, that he was a descendant of the Prophet, or, like one, had saintly pretensions; perhaps also conscious that no strangers but those armed with a sacred character would venture amongst them. We halted at a town called Naggar, of tolerable size, and walled in; but its defences, much injured by time, were neglected. The bazar I did not see, but conclude it was pretty large, from the number of Hindús I noticed. Before we reached Naggar we passed a large encampment of Vazíris, who had come here for the sake of pasture, which was abundant. We were duly provided with lodgings, and the malek came and sat with us, bringing his musicians and falconers—the latter to display his state,

and the former to beguile our tedium. He was a young man, dressed gaily in silks of gaudy colours, and rather trifling in his manners. He directed his attention to me, and, amongst many questions, inquired what I would wish prepared for my evening's meal. He was surprised to find that anything prepared for himself would be agreeable to me. He farther desired me to write him something that he might wear, as a charm, around his neck. Not wishing to take the trade of my companion, the Saiyad, out of his hands, I protested that I possessed no supernatural power or secret. On which the Saiyad scribbled something on a scrap of paper, which was reverentially received by the malek. Conferring charms and antidotes against accidents and diseases is one of the means employed by Saiyads and others to impose upon the credulity of the ignorant, who, however, are very willingly imposed upon.

Matters were going on very amicably, when a soldier recognized in the horse of the Ták múnshí, or vakíl, as he now announced himself, an animal that had been stolen from himself. Much altercation ensued, the Naggar people insisting upon the delivery of the horse, and the múnshí refusing to comply, maintaining that his master, the nawâb, had purchased it. This dispute detained us the next day; nor were we suffered to proceed the following one until papers were given, and it was agreed that some one should go to Ták to receive the value of the horse. A singularity attended this horse, as it

was named by the people the Feringhí horse, being branded with numbers and a cross. It had been, as they asserted, rejected from the cavalry service in India. On this account they often referred to me, and urged, that the marks did not allow them to be mistaken as to the animal.

This affair arranged, we resumed our journey; and in our progress this day over a well-cultivated country, were saluted by nearly every individual we met with a cordial shake of the hand, and the Pashto greeting of "Urkalah rází," or "You are welcome." I knew not how to reconcile this friendly behaviour with the character for ferocity I had heard of these people, and was gratified to discover that, if implacable abroad, they were possessed of urbanity at home. Every house here on the plain, without the towns, where numbers impart a feeling of security, is indeed a castle and fortified; and it would appear that the feuds existing in the community render it imperative that every individual should adopt precautionary measures for his safety. The advocate of anarchy, in contemplating so precarious a state of society, might learn to prize the advantages conferred by a mild and well-regulated government, as he might be induced to concede a little of his natural right, in preference to existing in a state of licentious independence, as the savage inhabitant of Bannú, continually dreading and dreaded.

Near the houses, or castles, were generally small copses of mulberry trees, and occasionally a few

plum-trees, and vines, were intermingled with them. Water was most plentiful, and conducted over the soil in numberless canals. We halted this day at another good-sized town, and were kindly received by the malek. He was very civil to me, and wished me to stay some time with him, and rest myself, pointing out the toils attendant upon the long march through the hills in front, which he said I should not be able to accomplish, as my feet were already blistered. He assured me that I should be paid every attention, and that a goat should be furnished every day for my food. He seemed to think that Feringhís ate voraciously of animal food. In the evening he ordered some of his men to practise firing at a target, for my diversion; and one of his reasons for wishing my stay, I believe, was, that I might teach his men always to hit the mark, which, from what I observed of their dexterity now, they never contrived to do.

This malek was superior to his brother chief of Naggar both in years and wisdom, and he was so frank and courteous, that we were glad to stay a day in the town as his guests. We occupied the principal masjít, in which the effects of the party were lodged—and the camel saddles, which were plentifully garnished with silver ornaments, were covered with linen, the better to elude observation. The men of the party had gone to the malek's house, his family, no doubt, having ample need of many of the Saiyad's charms, leaving a youth, of twelve to fourteen years of age, in charge of the property. I

was also reposing there. The youth closed the doors of the masjít, and fastened them inside, refusing admittance to persons, who, it proved, were weavers of cotton stuffs, and accustomed to lodge their machinery, when their labour was over, in the house of God. They insisted upon being allowed entrance. The youth was stedfast in denial; and we were assailed by stones, ejected through apertures in the walls. They rained in upon us so copiously that the urchin, apprehensive of the result of a siege, became bewildered, and opened the doors, when the assailants poured in; and the covers of the camel-saddles being removed, the silver ornaments were exposed to observation. The youth was smartly beaten by two or three of them; and he, in turn, espying the múnshí's sword, unsheathed it, and compelled his opponents to fly. He pursued them, sword in hand and bursting with rage, into the town. At this stage of the business the Saiyad and his companions returned. One of them was despatched to inform the malek of the outrage; but, it proving that no offence had been intended, the affair terminated. The people were particularly anxious that I, being a stranger, should be convinced that no robbery had been designed, and that the saddles were uncovered merely to satisfy curiosity. The Hindús even seemed so concerned for the good repute of the place that many of them came to me upon the subject, and they assured me, that had I wealth not to be counted it would be

secure in this town. There was an impression here, and I had noted it also at Naggar, that the property with the party belonged to me: indeed, that my companions were my servants, and that my poverty was assumed the better to pass through the country.

The next morning we were provided with a guide to conduct us through the mountains, and a small horse was presented by the malek to our Saiyad. As we took leave, the malek, with apparent sincerity, again urged me to stay with him some time, and let my feet get well. He pointed to the hills I had to cross, and seemed seriously to think I should break down on the road. We were not far, or more than three or four miles from the skirt of the hill, to which we directed our course. At a village near the town we had just left I was accosted by three or four persons, who told me they were sent by Mír Kammaradín, with his salám and request that I would wait for him, as he would be at the town from which we had started, on the morrow. I asked, who is Mír Kammaradín, and was told a fáquír. I reasoned, what have I to do with a fáquir, or why should I on his account delay my journey. The messengers, while testifying extreme anxiety that I should wait for their master, were unable to advance a better motive for my doing so than the wish of the Mír. I had preceded my companions; when they came up, I inquired of them who Mír Kammaradín was, and they said, slightingly, "A fáquír

who has been to Delhí." This answer did not increase my desire to see him, and I dismissed his messengers. Subsequently, when I reached Peshâwer, I found that the Mír was a highly respected pír, who had been very useful to Mr. Moorcroft, and that the Vazírís were his moríds, and looked up to him as their spiritual guide—that on this occasion he was about to make his annual progress amongst them, to receive their offerings and his dues. In conversation with his son at Chamkanni the young man observed truly, that I had lost an excellent opportunity of visiting the Vazírís, under the protection of his father; that I might have seen what no Feringhí had ever seen, and have filled my book with extraordinary things. To obviate the chagrin experienced when I became apprised of the chance I had suffered to slip away, I endeavoured to persuade myself that "whatever is is best;" yet I have often felt regret, although aware that the case was one in which regret was useless.

The country of Marwat can scarcely be considered independent, revenue, or tribute, being occasionally exacted from it by the nawâb of Déra, whose supremacy is not, however, acknowledged. None of his officers reside in the country, the inhabitants being left to their own control; and any demands he makes upon them, require to be supported by force.

Wheat appeared to be the only grain cultivated, and goats their principal stock. Horses were few,

as were sheep and horned cattle, while asses were more numerous. The heat was very intense, and the season was more forward than at Pesháwer. The great evil of this country is the want of a due supply of water. For the crops, dependence is placed upon rain; and bands, or mounds, are constructed to collect and to divert upon the lands the bounty of the clouds. It is clear that in dry seasons the agriculturist will be distressed. Water for domestic purposes is brought from long distances; the few pools of rain-water, being judged unfit for such use, are set aside for cattle.

The villages of Marwat have a cleanly appearance, and the inhabitants, if rude, are yet frank and manly in their manners. They are one of the races,—and there are many such amongst the Afghâns, although all are not so,—who have nothing frivolous in their character. If not altogether amiable, they are at least steady and respectable. There is no single authority established in Marwat, the several villages being governed by their own maleks, or rather influenced by them. They are independent of each other, but combine in cases of invasion, or other matters affecting the interests of the community at large.

The country of Bannú has great advantages in a large extent of fertile soil, and in an abundant supply of water, which can be turned with facility upon the lands. Favoured by climate, its capability of yielding a variety of produce is very

great. The good people who hold it are not, however, enterprizing or experimental agriculturists, and besides wheat, rice, múng, and a little sugar-cane, zir-chób, or turmeric, is the only plant, of foreign growth originally, which has been introduced. There is so much pasture-land in Bannú that, without inconvenience to their own cattle, the natives can allow their neighbours, the Vazíris, to graze their flocks and horses upon it. There are many groves of date-trees in one portion of the plain, regarded, perhaps justly, in these countries as evidences of fertility. The reason may be, that they are sure indications of water, it being observed, that without that desideratum being at hand, they cannot thrive. Cattle, of course, are plentiful in Bannú, and in all kinds of rural wealth the inhabitants may be pronounced rich.

On the same plain as Marwat the Bannú people have, besides a difference in their costume, a smaller stature than the inhabitants of the former place. The Marwatí is generally clad in coarse white linen, in much the same manner as the Patáns on the banks of the Indus. The people of Bannú wear dark clothing, and are fond of lúnghís, with ornamental borders. Both in dress and appearance they assimilate with the mountain tribes. They are very brave, and remarkable for entertaining an *esprit de pays*. They are eloquent in eulogiums upon their country, and the exclamation, "My own dear Bannú!" is frequently

uttered by them. The authority is vested in the respective maleks, some of whom, those living in towns, are enabled to retain followers in pay, as they derive a money revenue from the Hindús residing in them. They have, however, little or no power without their towns, every occupant of a fort being his own master, while he neither pays tribute nor acknowledges submission to any one. This state of things, while opposed to the ambition of an individual, is favourable to cherishing that spirit which preserves the independence of the society at large; and the more powerful do not think their interests would be served by altering it. The system of equality, while productive of more or less internal commotion, is admirably effective when circumstances call for mutual exertion; and all parties, laying aside their private animosities, in such cases, heartily unite in defence of the public freedom; in the advantages of which all participate.

It is possible that Bannú may formerly have been much more populous, and that its government was better regulated; for it will be remembered, that three or four centuries ago the high road, followed from Kâbal to India, led through it, as we find in the history of Taimúr's expedition. That this route was open at a much earlier period is evident from the notices of the Máhomedan invasion of the country, the armies of the Caliphs having clearly advanced through

Bannú and Khúram, upon Ghazní, then, it would appear, the capital of the country. Hurreeou, where a great battle is noted to have been fought between the prince of Ghazní and the Mússulmân invaders, is plainly the modern Harí-âb, (the Iryab of some maps,) in Khúram. Of a prior state of prosperity, the actual towns in Bannú may be accepted as testimonies — for it is more natural to consider them as feeble vestiges of the past than as creations of recent days. They even yet carry on a considerable traffic, and nearly engross that with the mountain Vazírís. In every village of Marwat and of Bannú there are weavers of coarse cottons, called karbâs, but in the towns of Bannú are looms employed in the fabric of finer goods, both of cotton and silk, particularly lúnghís. The Hindús in the two towns I visited were too cheerful to allow me to suppose that they were harshly treated, or that they lived in insecurity.

Máhárájá Ranjit Singh once marched with an army of twenty-five thousand men to Lakkí, on the Khúram river. He exacted thirty thousand rupees, but did not judge it prudent or convenient to make a permanent settlement in the country, as, it is said, he had contemplated.

CHAPTER VII.

Vazírí huts. — Vazíris venerate Saiyads. — Kâfr Kot. — Its construction. — Remarks on similar localities. — Entertainment at village. — Incident. — Scenery. — Ahmed Kozah. — Masjíts. — Hângú. — Sadú Khân. — Preceded by Saiyad. — Situation of Hângú. — Orchards. — Character of Sadú Khân. — Approach of Peshâwer army. — Hângú evacuated. — Proceed to Kohât. — Reconnoitring party. — Lo. — Encounter with Faizúlah Khân. — Pír Máhomed Khân. — His coolness. — Shákur Khân. — Abdúl Wâhab Khân's son. — Village. — Kohât. — Trade and manufactures. — Gardens. — Springs. — Provinces of Kohât and Hângú. — Cultivation. — Minerals. — Coal. — Asbestus. — Fuel. — Climate. — Inhabitants. — Túrís. — Politics. — Leave Kohât. — Mountain pass. — Rencounter. — Bangí Khél. — Detained a guest. — Incident. — An old acquaintance. — Return to Kohât. — Altered behaviour of Pír Máhomed Khân. — Sâleh Máhomed. — Messenger from Pesháwer. — Army marches. — Reach Pesháwer. — Country passed. — Elephant.

We soon arrived at the entrance into the hills, where we found capacious reservoirs of excellent water. The whole of the day was occupied in the ascent and descent of mountains, of great elevation. A few Vazírí huts, of miserable appearance, occurred in some of the water courses. Our people procured fire from the inhabitants; and did not wish me to make myself too conspicuous. We halted awhile at a spot where two or three vines were hanging

over a spring of water, and were joined by several persons, although we did not see their habitations.

I did not consider we were in any particular danger amongst these hills; indeed, so far as I could judge, in none. The Vazíris, although notorious robbers, in common with other lawless tribes, regard the descendants of their Prophet with awe, and a feeling of respectful reverence, and esteem themselves fortunate to receive their benedictions, and other little aids their superstition teaches them to think essential, which they (the Saiyads) liberally bestow, as they cost them little. We had, moreover, the Bannú guide with us, whose protection would probably have availed us more, in case of need, than the hallowed character of the Saiyad; the Vazíris and people of Bannú being on a good understanding, one party would consequently be careful not to invalidate a safe conduct afforded by the other. It was clear also, that the malek, a prudent man, had given us a steady and trustworthy guide. While it was yet daylight we passed around the brow of a hill, opposite to which, and separated by a water-course, was a much higher one, on whose summit were a series of walls, describing the ancient fortress, named in these parts, Kâfr Kót, or the infidel's fortress. Above the path we were following, the rocks were so arranged, that I was doubtful whether the peculiarity of structure was the effect of art or of the sportive hand of nature. They wore the appearance of decayed

buildings, while on the verge of the hill was a parapet, or what so nearly resembled it that, in the cursory view my time permitted me to take, I did not dare make up my mind respecting it, and I would have been very glad, had not the fear of losing my company prevented me from staying, to have satisfied myself.

Kâfr Kót is believed by the natives to have existed before the Máhomedan invasion of India. The stones employed in its construction are represented to be of wonderful dimensions. I have been told by a gentleman who has visited it, that he did not consider it so ancient, as there are embrasures for artillery in the towers. The natives, in reply to this objection, affirm that the embrasures are modern additions. The fortress has long since been abandoned, owing, it is said, to water being distant. This is one of those places which deserved a more rigid inspection. A line of massive wall, wherever found, is styled by the present inhabitants of these regions, Kâfr Kót, or Killa Kâfr, equivalent and general terms, which, in most instances, ill explain the nature of the remains of antiquity on which they are conferred. So far from having been originally places of defence, the greater number of them denote the sepulchral localities of by-gone races. In the remote and sequestered sites in which they are found, it is inconceivable that large towns and fortresses should

have been fixed; the former could not have flourished, and the latter would have been of no utility. Whatever may be the character of Kâfr Kót, it would have afforded me pleasure to have visited it, particularly as, with reference to its adaptation as a fortress in modern times, it has sometimes occurred to me, that it may be the Naggar mentioned by the historians of Amúr Taimír as in the vicinity of Bannú, although it will have been noted that there is a Naggar in the district of Bannú itself.

Night overtook us amongst the hills, and our guide was desirous that we should rest and await the morn; to which the Saiyad would not consent. At length, to our great joy, we cleared them, and traversing for about two cosses a broken and stony plain, where the white pink grew abundantly in a state of nature, we arrived, after the period of the last prayers, at a village, seated on the skirt of another and smaller range of hills. Here we occupied the masjít; and the malek, notwithstanding the late hour, ordered his people to make ready a repast of rice, deeming it incumbent to show attention to the Pír Sáhib who had honoured him with his company. A táviz, as usual, repaid the hospitality. This march my friends computed at twenty-four cosses of road distance; and from its difficult nature, my feet became exceedingly painful, although I had occasionally been seated on the horses and camels. As we entered this village our guide from Bannú took his

leave, saying, that the people here were his enemies. He hoped that we were satisfied with him, and shook all our hands in turn.

At daybreak next morning we ascended the hills, our route over which was visible from the village. We crossed three successive ranges, of considerable altitude, although very inferior in that respect to the great mountains of the former march. Our route led westernly, until we crossed a small but rapid stream, after which we turned to the north. The hills since leaving Bannú had been tolerably well-wooded, although they produced no timber trees. In these smaller ranges the quantity of wood increased, and pomegranate, with other wild fruit-trees, were abundant. In the valleys and water courses a variety of aloe was constantly seen. We at length came into a valley of considerable extent, and halted during the heat of the day in a small copse, where weavers were occupied with their labours, and close to a village, at the skirt of the hills to the right hand. Our morning's repast was provided by these weavers, who set before us cakes of bread, beautifully white, which I found were prepared from júárí flour. On crossing the stream just mentioned, the party refreshed themselves with the water. A tin vessel was given to me by the Saiyad, who afterwards replenished it, and handed it to one of the Ták camel-drivers. The man refused to drink from it, as I had used it, asserting, that I was

not a Mússulmân. The Saiyad smiled. I had often found that in towns the low and ignorant, especially such as had visited India, would reject any vessel I had touched, alleging that Europeans ate swine, and, moreover, dogs, jackals, &c. Men of sense and condition were not troubled with like scruples, and from them I heard of no such indecent remarks. Europeans have certainly an evil reputation for not being very choice in their food. There is a saying, that a Mússulmân may eat with a Jew, but should never sleep in his house; with a Christian, on the contrary, he should never eat, but may sleep beneath his roof. It is supposed that the Jew rises many times during the night, with the intent to slay his guest.

In the afternoon our party resumed their journey, proceeding up the valley which leads to Hângú and Kohât. The scenery is extremely diversified, and many of the trees were charged with flowers, unknown to me. Beneath the hills, on the opposite side of the valley, were two or three villages with houses built of stones, as the structures here universally are. Small copses of fruit-trees were always seen near the villages, the vine, the plum, and the peach. I was so exhausted this day that I lagged behind the party. The camel drivers also, having discovered that I was not a Mússulmân, declined to allow me to ride their animals, although requested to do so by the Saiyad. I did not re-

member the name of the place where it was intended to pass the night, but I followed the high road until it branched off into two directions. I might have been perplexed, but a shepherd hailed me, and told me to take the road to the right. He had been instructed by my friends to point it out to me. I was soon overtaken by an armed man, but I could understand little of what he said, his dialect being Pashto. I saw, however, that he intended to be very civil. In his company I arrived at a village, where I found the Saiyad and his party, and where we passed the night. The village was called Ahmed Kozah, and had a small bazar.

In the morning, we traced a road skirting the hills to the left, the valley to the right having considerable expansion, with two or three villages, and much cultivation. In the course of our progress we passed many small groves of mulberry and other trees, where masjíts were erected, with dependent and contiguous wells of water, serving at once as places of repose and refreshment to the weary passenger, and for devotion. The union of these objects I judged extremely decorous and commendable, and as reflecting credit on Mússulmân manners and hospitality. I often availed myself of them on this day, for the sad state of my feet did not allow me to keep pace with my friends. I had long descried, on the summit of a lofty hill, a white tomb, arriving parallel to which was the small town of Hângú, in a recess of the hills, with numerous

gardens, or orchards of fruit-trees, in its vicinity. It was said, I believe, to be eight cosses distant from Ahmed Kozah.

I was here conducted to the chief, Sadú Khân, a son of the Nawâb Samad Khân, who resides at Kâbal. He received me courteously, and invited me to stay some days with him; to which I had no difficulty in consenting, as the road was not now so dangerous, and companions could at all times be procured. The Saiyad and his party had, I found, passed on without halting here, the reason for which, although I knew not at the time, became manifest in a few days by the events which developed themselves. I was utterly incapable of keeping up with them, and felt no anxiety for the few effects in charge of the good man, which I was certain to recover whenever I reached Pesháwer.

Hângú comprises perhaps three hundred houses, and has a small bazar, the Hindú houses in which are built of mud. The fort, in which the chief dwelt, was built of stones, and defended by jinjáls. The situation of this little town is very pretty, and it is bounteously provided with water, many fine springs issuing from the adjacent rocks, and forming a rivulet, which winds through the valley in the direction of Kohât. In its numerous orchards were the vine, the apple, the plum, the peach, the common mulberry, and the shâhtút, or royal mulberry, as here called. It may be

noted, that the common mulberry of these countries is not that of Great Britain (the morus nigra), the latter being what is called the shâh-tút, or royal mulberry, at Kâbal. This term, as at Hângú, and the countries to the south and east, is applied to a very different tree, which is not known at Kâbal, and produces long taper fruit, of colours both red and white. I also observed the bramble, or blackberry-bush, scrambling over the hedges. Sadú Khân had a small flower-garden, which he tended himself. This young chief was far more respectable in appearance and behaviour than the great men I had been, of late, accustomed to see; he was indeed a well-bred Dúrání. He was allowed by his people to be of amiable disposition, and was considered a devout Músulmân, which meant, I presume, that he was punctual in the observance of prayers and fasting. Yet he had, like most men, his foible—also a common one in the east,—he was addicted to kímía, and had expended much time and treasure in the idle search of the great secret, which would, it is believed, enable the discoverer to make gold at discretion.

A few day's after my abode here, intelligence was suddenly received of the approach of a hostile force from Peshâwer. Sadú Khân immediately collected the revenue due to him, and proceeded with his followers to Kohât, where his elder brother, Máhomed Osmân Khân resided. The brothers, in consultation, concluding it was impossible to repel the

invasion, returned to Hângú; and taking all their property with them, evacuated the country, and retired, by a mountain route, to Kâbal, which I was told they would reach in eight days. With Máhomed Osmân Khân were two or three elephants, and a numerous zenána. I now understood why the Saiyad had not halted here; he must have heard of the expected movement, and was aware that, as an agent of Sultân Máhomed Khân, he would have been liable to detention, and that the presents he was conveying would, in all probability, have been taken from him.

I had a good opportunity of passing on to Kâbal, had my feet justified the thought that I could have kept company with the retiring host. Although improved by rest, they were not yet quite well, so I scarcely entertained the idea. I had also a few papers amongst my effects in the Saiyad's charge, to which I attached a value at the time, and did not wish to lose, although it subsequently proved that I was unable to preserve them.

Hângú having been abandoned by its chief, I had no inducement to remain there, and accordingly proceeded up the valley on the road to Kohât. The scenery was extremely beautiful, the valley never very broad, in turn contracting and expanding, but always well filled with trees, generally mulberry-trees, I presume indigenous, whose fruits were now ripe. Villages occasionally occurred, in all of which I was kindly received. Near one of these I met

a small reconnoitring party from the Pesháwer force. The leader asked me a few questions, but at the same time assured me that he had no intention to molest, or interfere with me, a stranger. At a village called Lo, a saiyad made me his guest, under the idea that, as a Feringhí, I must be acquainted with some secret, which he hoped I would impart to him. Here were a profusion of springs of water, and many gardens of plum-trees and vines, the latter supporting themselves on the branches of the former. In this village, as in the other ones I had passed, the Hindús had deserted their dwellings, having paid the year's impost to their old rulers, and being fearful to be compelled to pay it over again to their new rulers.

From Lo I continued my route up the valley, delighted with its picturesque appearance. At length I met a second party of mounted men, attended by two or three fellows, running on foot. The latter stopped me, and searched me so roughly that my shirt was rent. Addressing myself to the leader, who told me his name was Faizúlah Khân, I remonstrated in strong language against such cowardly treatment, and asked him if he did not think he ought to be ashamed of himself. He expressed regret that my shirt had been rent, but directed one of the men to escort me to Pír Máhomed Khân, the commander of the invading force. The fellow instantly seized my shirt collar; on which I bestowed a few imprecations on Faizúlah Khân,

who rebuked his myrmidon, and told him to conduct me decently, and not as a prisoner. The fellow then took me by the hand. Pír Máhomed Khân was the youngest of the four brother Sirdárs of Peshâwer, and I found, with his troops, was close at hand. We soon came to the camp, located beneath the shade of mulberry-trees, and I was led before the chief, who happened to be passing along in a pálkí. He silently acknowledged my salutation, and was told by the man who brought me, that I had been met on the road, but had no papers. The man was dismissed, and I was taken to the darbár, which the Sirdár was now proceeding to hold. He was very sulky, and did not address a word to me, although at times he took a minute survey of me. The various minor chiefs were very civil, and supplied me with fruit, unripe plums, which, by the avidity with which they devoured them, they seemed to prize more than I did. During this audience several messengers arrived, all announcing the departure of the two brothers from Hângú. Pír Máhomed Khân hypocritically expressed his satisfaction that they had adopted the prudent part and declined battle; observing, that they were his relations (nephews), and Músulmâns. I had been seated by the side of Shákúr Khân, a cousin of the Sirdárs, the second in rank in the camp, and of high reputation as a soldier. He was young, frank, and ingenuous, and his manly deportment testified that his character for valour was not

exaggerated or undeserved. When the darbár closed, he took me with him to his quarters, and we were engaged in conversation and smoking the húhak, which he freely gave to me, until he was summoned to the noon repast in Pír Máhomed Khân's tent; on which a young man, the son of Abdúl Wâhab Khân, a chief of consequence, took me by the hand, and led me to his quarters, telling me I must be his guest while in the camp. My new acquaintance, I found, had but lately returned from Lúdíána, where he had been in the service of the ex-king Sújah al Múlkh. He there had become, in some degree, familiar with Feringhís, and hence the cause of his civility to me.

On the following morning the troops marched for Hângú, a salute of artillery being first discharged, in honour of the conquest of the country. I bade farewell to my friend, and took the road to Kohât. This place was situated mid-way between the two towns, being six cosses from either. There was a pretty village seated at the foot of an eminence in the midst of the valley, on whose summit was a well-built tomb. After proceeding about three cosses the valley considerably widened, and disclosed a large plain, at the upper end of which was the town of Kohât. The villages in this part were not so numerous.

On reaching Kohât, I was entertained at the house of a múllá, being conducted there by a young man, with whom I had joined company on

the road. The town is seated on and about an eminence, and is walled in. On a superior mound is the citadel, not very formidable in appearance, and much dilapidated. It serves for the abode of the chief, and is furnished with a garrison. The *coup d'œil* of the place is agreeable, and the whole has an aspect of antiquity, which Hângú has not. The bazar is considerable, and the Hindús have a brisk domestic trade. There are some manufactures carried on, and that of rifle barrels is extensive, and of good reputation. There are many gardens in the neighbourhood, where the fruits, although neither very abundant nor particularly esteemed, are those both of cold and warm climates. The fruits of Kâbal are seen mingled with those of India — a mango tree, the only one, indeed, of its species so far north on the western side of the Indus, flourishes and bears fruit, in company with apple and walnut trees. The principal masjít in Kohât is a handsome edifice, comparatively speaking only. It is more distinguished by the baths belonging to it, which are commodious, and filled by springs of water gushing from the rock on which the masjít is built. The water of Kohât is much vaunted for its sanative properties; that of Hângú, although beautifully transparent, is reputed to be unwholesome. Kohât, the capital of a province, is but small; I question whether it contains five hundred houses.

The province of Kohât, of which Hângú is a dependency, belonged to the Nawâb Samad Khân, one of the numerous sons of the celebrated Sarfaráz, or Páhíndar Khân, and therefore half-brother to the present rulers at Pesháwer, Kâbal, and Kândahar. Possessed of great wealth, he resided at Kâbal, and committed the government of Kohât to his sons. The revenue derived by Máhomed Osmân Khân from Kohât, and its annexed lands and villages, was said to be eighty thousand rupees; while that enjoyed by Sadú Khân from Hângú and its vicinity, was asserted to be twenty thousand rupees.

The plain of Kohât and the valley of Hângú are well cultivated and populous. Wheat is grown, but the stony soil in many parts seems more adapted to the culture of maize, or júárí, as here called, the quality of which is excellent, and the returns large, while the flour makes admirable bread, and is the general food of the inhabitants. The great command of water, in many situations, is made available for the irrigation of rice lands, the produce of which is ample and good. There is reason to believe that the mountains of this province contain many curious mineral substances, as well as useful ones. Indifferent coal is found generally on the surface, the country being included in the great coal formation, which, whatever may be its value, evidently extends for some distance west of the Indus in these latitudes. I

fear the mountainous character of the country about Kohât, and thence to the Indus, will scarcely authorize the hope that this useful mineral will ever be found but in veins too thin to repay the labour of extracting it. Perhaps it may be in greater quantity at Kânígoram, where it is found in conjunction with iron, which is constantly worked. But from this place to the Indus the transport would be difficult. I have procured specimens of asbestus, said to occur in veins parallel with the coal strata at Kânígoram; and both are stated to be in a hill. Jet, and other bituminous products, are also brought from the neighbourhood of Kohât, as well as fluid bitumen, or múmía. We are told of lapis lazulí, or a stone resembling it, and of indications of copper, to be found in the rocks between Kohât and Hângú. It will have been noted, that the mountains of Bangash are well-wooded, therefore there is abundance of fuel, but there are no large timber trees. The climate appeared to be temperate, and I should have supposed genial; but it is complained that Hângu is unhealthy, the cause whereof is referred to the water. It is, in truth, buried, as it were, in the hills; and the circumstances which contribute to the picturesque effect of its location may impair the salubrity of its atmosphere.

The inhabitants of the villages in the valley leading from Hângú to Kohât I discovered were principally Shías, as are all the tribes of the

Túrís, their neighbours, although not so bigoted as these; or, being under control, they are compelled to conceal their fervour. The Túrís are very particular, and accustomed when they see a stranger, to ask him if he is straight or crooked, putting at the same time the fore-finger to their foreheads, and holding it, first in a perpendicular position, and then in a contorted one. If desirous to be civilly received, the stranger had better reply that he is straight, by which they understand he is a Shía.

As the government of Kohât and Hângú is on all sides surrounded by turbulent and predatory tribes, it is always necessary to have a sufficient body of troops in it, both to ensure internal peace and to collect tribute from the dependent villages, who withhold it, if not enforced. The little village of Ahmed Kozah had been but recently, I was informed, compelled to pay tribute by Sadú Khân.

About this time, or a little previous to my visit, the Sirdárs of Kândahár and Peshávwer, jealous of the prosperity and growing power of their brother Dost Máhomed Khân at Kâbal, had concerted a plan to attack him on either side. In furtherance of this combination, the Peshâwer army was to have marched upon Jelálabád, while that of Kândahár was to advance upon Ghazní. In anticipation of the simultaneous movement, Pír Máhomed Khân had now possessed himself of Kohât,

as the Nawâb Samad Khân, although their brother was, from his residence at Kâbal, considered in the interest of Dost Máhomed Khân. Whether he was so or not,—and it did not follow that he was,—the opportunity to acquire an accession of territory, so conveniently situated, was too tempting to be neglected. It struck me, that the approach of Pír Máhomed Khân was entirely unexpected; and Sadú Khân spoke of the whole business as a most flagitious one.

The plain of Kohât appears on all sides surrounded with hills; on the summit of one of which, to the north, is seen a watch-tower, by which the road to Pesháwer leads. The ascent to this is long and difficult, and said to be dangerous, the adjacent hills to the west being inhabited by lawless tribes, who are not Músulmâns. They may be Shíás, who would not be considered Músulmâns by the orthodox Súní inhabitants of the town of Kohât. I, however, having little to apprehend, as I had nothing to lose, started alone, and made for the hills. Where the plain ceased, a long and open darra, or valley, commenced, where it was evident the Pesháwer troops had been for some time encamped, prior to the retreat of Máhomed Osmân Khân from Kohât; and this valley continued to the foot of the kotal, or pass. I ascended the mountain, and safely reached the summit, on which stood the tower, having met no one on the road. The tower was deserted. From this

point a long descent brought me into a valley, where were signs of cultivation. As I followed the road through it, I was overtaken by a man, who said nothing, but walked by my side. He offered me a piece of bread, which, to avoid giving offence, I accepted. He then picked up a blade or two of grass, which he twisted, and still preserving silence, repaired a casualty in one of my shoes. We arrived at a pond of water, which I was passing, when my companion, who I had began to suspect, was dumb, asked me, if I would not drink. We now parted, his course being different to mine, and I again proceeded alone. I soon arrived at a village seated up the hill to the right, to which I went and rested awhile. The water here is procured from a spring in the rocks above the village, and this spot I also visited.

Beyond this village the valley contracted into a defile, over which a substantial band, or rampart, had once been projected. It is now in ruins and unheeded. Passing this, the defile opens upon a plain of large extent, and a village, distinguished by its towers, is seen under the hills to the left. Leaving the high road, which leads directly across the plain, I struck off for the village, which was named Bangí Khél. I found a Dúrání there, with his servant, who told me that the village on the hill which I had passed belonged to him, that is, that he received the revenue from it. He regretted that he had not met me there, as he could

then have better shown me attention. As it was, he was very civil.

In the morning he followed the road to his village; and I was going to take that for Pesháwer, when the Patáns of the village were so urgent in entreating me to pass the day with them, that I acceded. I was now led to the hûjra, or house set apart for the accommodation of travellers, and where, in the evening, the old and the young assemble, to converse, and smoke the chillam. Here was hung up a musical instrument, for the use of those who were qualified to touch its harmonious strings. The water at this place was excellent, but brought, I think, from some distance. Most of the males went out during the day to the fields, where the harvest was in progress, and they sallied forth, fully armed with matchlock, sword, and shield. I passed here the second night, and the ensuing morning was about to leave, when an idiot—who being unfit for labour, was unasked to perform any, and therefore generally loitered about the hûjra,—asked me for my cap. I could not give it to him, as to walk bare-headed was out of the question, on which account he might as well have asked for my head. But he was not satisfied unless he gained his point, and soon evinced an inclination forcibly to acquire it. I had received two or three slaps on the face, and more buffets, and was at a loss what to do with the fellow, being averse to strike him, if it could

be avoided, when, luckily, some one appeared, and I was enabled to get off before the matter had grown serious, and while I yet retained the cap coveted by the poor man. I speedily regained the high road. The plain was partially cultivated with wheat, and the parties engaged in cutting it had always their arms piled near them. Beyond this space a fresh defile, amongst low hills, led into a much larger valley, under the hills encircling which, both to the right and left, were villages and gardens. I hailed with pleasure these appearances, as a token of my approach to a populous region. As I proceeded along the road two horsemen galloped towards me from a small copse of trees at some distance. I was considering what might be their intention, having no thought but that, at the best, they were soldiers of Pír Máhomed Khân, and that I should again have my shirt rent, and be searched for papers — when they reached me, and one of them, before I could divine what he was about to do, had dismounted, and embraced my feet. What was my astonishment when I beheld an old acquaintance, Saiyad Máhomed, a Dúrání of Peshâwer! He had recognized me, or rather I may say, the Feringhí cap, which I had not long before been in danger of losing. He was so anxious that I should return with him for two or three days to Kohât, whither he was going on business, that I was overcome by his entreaties and his tears, although I questioned whether I

might not as well have gone on to Pesháwer. Saiyad Máhomed took up his attendant behind him on the horse he rode, and I put myself into the vacant saddle. We halted at no place on the road, and by afternoon had reached Kohât, where we put up with some relative of Saiyad Máhomed's.

Two or three days after my second abode at Kohât Pír Máhomed Khân returned from Hângú, where he had left Abdúl Wâhab Khân as governor. In the evening, as I was taking a stroll, he also, in course of his evening's ride, came near me. Observing me, he turned his horse from the path, and rode to me. He was now very civil, and asked, moving to and fro his hand, why I had not gone to Kâbal. I told him I had neither horse nor money, and asked, in turn, how I could go to Kâbal. "Oh," he said, "I'll give you horse and money, and you shall go with me to Kâbal." I knew nothing at this time of the politics of the country, and had not before heard of the Sirdár's notion of going to Kâbal; therefore I inquired, when he was going? and he answered, that he should return to Pesháwer in a day or two, and then, as soon as his horses were shod, he should go. I remarked, "Very well;" and he requested Saiyad Máhomed to bring me to him in the morning. To account for the Sirdár's altered manner, I supposed that he had learned at Hângú that I had no farther connection with Sadú Khân than as a stranger partaking of his hospitality; and

now that he had no suspicion of me, he could afford to be familiar.

Saiyad Máhomed had a brother-in-law, Sâleh Máhomed, the mirákor to the Sirdár, a man in better circumstances than himself, and from his office possessing a little authority. He relieved his relative from the charge of entertaining me, and took me to his quarters, where I soon became at home in the Dúrání camp. The weather was very warm, and we were stationed beneath the shade of mulberry-trees in a garden, placing our cots, on which we reclined and slept, over a canal flowing by us. After the lapse of a few days, an express messenger arrived from Pesháwer, and the news he brought at once threw the camp into bustle and confusion. The horses were immediately ordered to be shod, and the noisy nâlbands became very busy with their hammers and horse-shoes. I learned from Sâleh Máhomed, as soon as he was at leisure to tell me what was the matter, that Saiyad Ahmed Shâh, so renowned or so notorious, had left his retreat in the Yúsef Zai country, and had moved upon Hashtnaggar, a fortress ten or eleven cosses from Pesháwer. It was necessary to march that very day, as the peril was imminent. Before sunset parties had begun to move, which they did without any order, and before night the whole force was on the road to Pesháwer. Pír Máhomed Khân was pleased to assign me a seat on his elephant, so I travelled comfortably; and in the morning we reached the city, having passed

over twenty-four cosses during the night. I was unable, of course, to see much of the country; however on leaving the valley in which I met Saiyad Máhomed, a slight transit over low hills brought us into the great plain of Pesháwer. On our left hand was a ruinous castle, of some size, which my companions were glad when they had passed, it being, as they said, a common resort of robbers. Neither were they quite at ease until they had crossed the barren uninhabited country, extending from the hills we had left to Mittaní; the first village of the cluster, immediately dependent on Pesháwer, a distance of eight or ten miles. The range between Kohât and Pesháwer extends easternly to Atak, while westernly it stretches to Seféd Koh. Other parallel ranges compose the hilly tract inhabited by the Khaibarís and Momands, which separates Pesháwer from Chúra and the Jelálabád valley. At the point where we left the range we had, to the west, minor hills intervening, the Afrédí district of Tírí. At Mittaní we halted awhile for the sake of fire and water. The elephant was extremely docile and manageable. He seemed to have great dread of a horse coming behind him; of which faculty the people with us profited, both to divert themselves, and to make the huge animal accelerate his pace. At Pesháwer we went to the Gúr Katrí, an old fortified Serâí, where Saiyad Máhomed, who had preceded us, was ready to receive me, and to conduct me to the house of Sâleh Máhomed, which happened to be quite close.

CHAPTER VIII.

Residence at Pesháwer. — Pír Máhomed Khân. — Visit Hasht-naggar.—Pesháwer.—Sáhibzâda's Bíbí at Chamkanní.—Village feast.—Sard Khânas.—Cholera. — Simple treatment.—Rulers—Their character.—Territory—Revenue—Force.—Inhabitants.—Political relations.—Saiyad Ahmed Shâh—His operations—His presumption.—Defection of Yár Máhomed Khân.—Victory of Síkhs. — Escape of Saiyad Ahmed Shâh.—Ravages of Síkhs.—Síkh mode of collecting tribute.—Léla.—M. Ventura outwitted. — Saiyad Ahmed Shâh's successes. — Capture of Pesháwer. — Death of Yár Máhomed Khân. — Pesháwer restored. — Saiyad Ahmed Shâh expelled.—Yusaf Zai tribes.—Severely treated by the Síkhs. — Their gallant resistance. — Provoke the Síkhs — Passage of the Indus.—Fearful loss.—Panic and slaughter of Yusaf Zais.—Government.—Tendency to change.—Zeal in favour of Saiyad Ahmed Shâh.—Activity of Saiyad Ahmed Shâh—His auxiliaries—His ability—His early life.— Feared by Ranjit Singh. — Conjectures of the vulgar. — Reports of his sanctity — His real character known.— Wadpaggar. — Desire to leave. — Inroad of Saiyad Ahmed Shâh.—Sâdadín.

SALEH MAHOMED did everything in his power to make my residence at Pesháwer as agreeable as possible, and people of all classes were most civil and desirous to oblige. I made a great number of acquaintance; and there seldom occurred any diversion or spectacle that I was not called to witness. The change also from a life of wandering to one of repose was not in itself disagreeable; and every

scene had the charm of novelty to recommend it. The inhabitants, if not so civilized as to have lost their natural virtues, were abundantly more so than the rude but simple tribes I had so long been conversant with; and as a stranger I had only to experience their good qualities. I had ample reason to be satisfied with them.

Pír Máhomed Khân frequently sent for me, and was profuse in orders that I should be supplied with money, and all needful things, none of which were complied with, which I the less heeded, as the Sirdár sometimes intimated a desire that I would remain with him, which I as constantly declined to do. Also, when I spoke to him of moving on to Kâbal, he would say, as he did at Kohât, that he was going there himself. One day he sent for me, and I found him sitting on a chahárpâhí just within the entrance of his house, having thrown off his upper garments, being covered with perspiration. He was cooling himself with a handkerchief, and telling me he was going to battle, asked if I would accompany him. I replied, that I would. At which he seemed pleased; and the next day sent to me the same elephant on which I had ridden from Kohât. Our destination proved to be Hashtnaggar, eleven cosses from Pesháwer, which was threatened by Saiyad Ahmed Shâh, who had made another advance from the Yusaf Zai districts. Here I was introduced to his brother, Saiyad Máhomed Khân, who holds Hashtnaggar and its dependencies, and we

stayed some days encamped on the banks of the Kâbal river, until the Sirdárs were assured that the saiyad had retired, when we returned to Pesháwer.

The city, which was represented to have flourished exceedingly under the Dúrání monarchy, has much declined, owing to the vicissitudes of power, and the recent spoliations and devastations of the Síkhs. The Bálla Hissar, once a favourite winter residence of the ancient kings, was entirely in ruins, only the garden remaining, in a neglected condition. The houses, most of them slightly constructed, of which the city is composed, may still number nine or ten thousand, which estimate would give from fifty to sixty thousand inhabitants. The environs are covered with mounds and vestiges of former habitations, not, however, of the present city, but of its remote predecessors. The residences of the sirdárs and of the nobility are, many of them, very respectable, and there are a great number of handsome and spacious gardens, although it is complained that the Síkhs have, in their inroads, cut down many of the best grown trees for fuel.

I succeeded in finding out the saiyad, with whom I had parted at Hângú, and the good man delivered me my effects, which he had carefully preserved. I visited so many people at Pesháwer, that it would be impossible to enumerate them. Amongst them was a zadú sai shâhzâda, or prince, who had been to Bombay, where he had seen, as he informed the

circle around him, three lakhs of cannon. I had also many friends amongst the múllas, or priests; and they have not only a character for learning, but are distinguished by amenity of manners. I should judge, however, that their scholastic reputation is not now so much merited as formerly it may have been. I was one morning conducted to Chamkanní, three or four miles from the city, where resides the relict of a celebrated saint, herself eminent for her virtues and liberality. My arrival being announced to the lady, she sent a message that Elphinstín Sáhib had paid her a visit, and had presented her with a variety of articles, which she yet preserved, and highly prized. An apology was made that the usual hour of repast had gone by; still it was urged that I should partake of a dinner, which was immediately brought in, and comprised so many delicacies, and was so admirably prepared, that I was surprised. The old lady, moreover, excused herself for not seeing me, by a message, that she had seen no male since the death of her husband. The holy family at Chamkanní was formerly very wealthy, and were always famous for costly hospitality. I had a proof that in the decline of fortune they were anxious to preserve their ancient reputation. The attendant múllas showed me over the tombs of the departed saints, the masjíts, and other buildings; and regretted, as I did, that they had been desecrated by the Síkhs. On another occasion I was invited

to a village feast, some two or three miles from the city, and found a large concourse of people assembled. The entertainment consisted of rice and roghan, but it was so bitter, that I was obliged to declare I could not eat it. Sâleh Máhomed, who was with me, instructed me that the unpalatable taste had been caused by certain twigs, which, according to him, were employed when it is intended to moderate the appetites of guests; and it proved that this feast was, in great measure, a compulsive one, wherefore the person, at whose charge it was made, not feeling at liberty to evade it, had taken this plan of making it as little expensive to himself as possible. I was amused to witness the wry faces of the company; who, nevertheless, persisted in eating, especially as Sâleh Máhomed had busied himself to procure me a dish in which the twigs had not been inserted, and to which I was able to do justice.

The gardens of the city afforded at all times pleasant walks, and, whether public or private, they were open to visitors. In many of them were wells, into which, during winter, water is placed; they are then closed, and reopened in summer, when the fluid is drawn up delightfully cool, a great object, as ice is not to be procured, or only by sirdárs, at great trouble and expense. The climate was very sultry; to obviate which the better houses have sardkhânas, or apartments under ground. Some of these have many stages and flights of

steps, but the lower ones, where the temperature most decreases, are dangerous from the presence of snakes. I found these places of refuge from heat to be very unpleasant, as they caused a cold perspiration, and I hardly suppose they can be healthy, although they are not the less used.

Pesháwer this year had a fearful visitant in the cholera; which commencing, I believe, at Jaipúr, in Rájpútána, had passed on to Amratsir, and thence following the line of the great commercial route, had crossed the Indus. It was computed that five thousand deaths had been occasioned by it; and it was no less lamentable to reflect on the destruction, than on the slight remedies employed to cope with the fatal disease. It may be judged how unable were the physicians of Pesháwer to contend with so powerful a foe, when sugar-candy became the favourite medicine. Many people who seemed to have survived the attack of the cholera, were suffered, as I thought, to die from inanition, and some of my neighbours, I believe, were lost in this manner; nor could my entreaties induce their relatives to give them food. It was urged, that the sufferers had a distaste for it. Máhomedans have a commendable resignation to disease, as to the other accidents of life, but it is distressing to behold their apathy under circumstances, when a little exertion would afford relief. Amongst the inhabitants of rank who perished, was Shakúr Khân Bárak Zaí, whom I met between Hângú

and Kohât, reputed the bravest officer attached to the interests of the chiefs of Pesháwer. This epidemic, it may be remarked, had travelled also from Jaipúr to the Bikkanír frontier, where it manifested itself at the first village. The Rájá Súrat Singh ordered the place to be burned,—and saved his kingdom from desolation.

Pesháwer was now governed by the Sirdárs Yár Máhomed Khân, Súltân Máhomed Khân, Saiyad Máhomed Khân, and Pír Máhomed Khân,—four brothers, sons of Páhindah Khân, and by the same mother. They appeared to preserve a good understanding with each other, and assembled daily at a common darbár, or council, at their mother's house. Each, of course, had a separate darbár to transact ordinary business with his own dependents.

The Sirdár Yár Máhomed Khân, the eldest, was nominally the chief, and in fact possessed the larger proportion of revenue, but Pír Máhomed Khân, the youngest, was perhaps the most powerful, from the greater number of troops he retained, besides being considered of an active, indeed, rather daring spirit. Súltân Máhomed Khân was not supposed to want capacity, and was held to be milder and more amiable than his brothers; but his excessive love of finery exposed him to ridicule, and the pleasures of the háram seemed to occupy more of his attention than public affairs. Saiyad Máhomed Khân was in intellect much inferior to the others, and looked upon as a cypher in all matters of

consultation and government. Súltân Máhomed Khân was, moreover, distinguished for his enmity to Dost Máhomed Khân of Kâbal, and for his extraordinary affection for his half-brother, Ráham Dil, Khân of Kândahár. He was also of the Sirdárs the one who paid most attention to Europeans who passed through the country,—in this respect vieing with the Nawâb Jabár Khân at Kâbal.

The territory held by the Sirdárs is of very limited extent, comprising only the city of Pesháwer, with the adjacent country, which might be included within a circle drawn from the city, as a centre, with a radius of twenty-five miles; but then, it is uncommonly fertile, and well cultivated; the command of water being so abundant from the rivers Bára and Jelálabád, which traverse it. The gross revenue of the city and lands was estimated at ten lákhs of rupees, to which one lákh has been added by the acquisition of Kohât and Hângú; which places have also afforded an increase of territory. The military retainers of the Sirdárs, probably, do not exceed three thousand men, if so many; but they could call out, if they had funds to subsist them, a numerous militia. Their artillery numbers ten or twelve pieces.

The inhabitants of the city of Pesháwer are a strange medley of mixed races, of Tájiks, Hindkís, Panjábís, Káshmírís, &c. and they are proverbially roguish and litigious; but the cultivators and residents in the country are Afghâns of the Momand,

Khalíl, and Kogíání families, and a very healthy population, ardently attached to their country and religion, and deserving better rulers than the ones they have.

The Sirdárs of Pesháwer cannot be called independent, as they hold their country entirely at the pleasure of Ranjit Singh—a natural consequence of the advance of his frontier to the Indus. Still the Síkh Rájá has not yet ventured to assume the full authority, and they are left in power, remitting him tribute, and placing their sons in his hands as hostages. They are impatient under the yoke, but every manifestation of contumacy only tends to confirm their subjection, and to aggravate the annoyances inflicted upon them.

But a year or two since Saiyad Ahmed Shâh appeared in these parts; and in the Yúsaf Zai country, succeeding in arousing the fanatic Máhomedan population, collected, it is said, above one hundred thousand men. If this number be exaggerated, it is yet certain that he had a prodigious host assembled, for he was joined by adventurers and crusaders from all parts of Afghânistân, and even from India. He gave out that he had a divine commission to take possession of the Panjâb, Hindostân, and China, and swore that he would compel Ranjit Singh to turn Mússúlmân, or cut off his head. The Saiyad marched to Noshára, on the Kâbal river, and crossed it, intending to commence his operations by the capture of Atak, on this side the key to the Panjâb.

The Pesháwer Sirdárs united themselves with the Saiyad, and joined his camp with their troops and guns. The Síkhs prepared to meet the crisis; and Harí Singh, at the head of thirty thousand men, was to keep them from crossing the Indus, until the Máhárájá should arrive with a large army, including all his regulars, from Lahore. In the Mússúlmân camp all was hope and exultation,—numbers, and the presumed favour of heaven, permitted none to doubt of success,—and a distribution was already made of the Síkh towns and villages. The soul of the Saiyad dilated; and in his pride of feeling, he used expressions implying that he considered himself the master of Pesháwer, and the Sirdárs as his vassals. They became suspicious; and their final defection, if not owing to this circumstance entirely, is by some palliated on account of it. The one half of Harí Singh's force, under an old warrior, Búdh Singh, had crossed the Indus, and marched near to the village of Saiyadwâla, where they threw up a sangar, or field-work. The Saiyad established himself at Saiyadwâla, and his host surrounded Búdh Singh's force within the sangar. The Síkhs were in great distress for some days; and Búdh Singh at length lost patience, and determined to extricate himself or to perish. In the meantime he had communicated with the Dúrání chiefs of Pesháwer, assuring them, that if they took no part against him in action, he would excuse their conduct in having joined the Saiyad,

to the Sirkár, or to Ranjit Singh. He reminded them of the immense army on the road, under the orders of the Sirkár, and pointed out that, the destruction of himself and troops would not influence the issue of the contest, and they must know the Sirkár was "zúráwar," or all powerful. These arguments decided the Sirdárs; and on the morning of battle, they who, with their cavalry and guns, were stationed in front, at once passed to the rear, Yár Máhomed Khân commanding, setting the example, and crying "Shikas! shikas!" or "Defeat! defeat!" Búdh Singh, who had three guns, discharged them, invoked his Gúrú, and charged the Mússulmân host. Resistance was very trifling: the happy temerity of Búdh Singh was crowned by deserved success; and the Síkhs boast, that each Singh on that famous day slew fifteen or twenty of his enemies; admitting, however, that they did not fight, but threw themselves on the ground. The Saiyad, who had assured his men that he had charmed the Síkh guns and matchlocks, became insensible. His friends say, that he had been drugged, by the artifice of the Sirdárs. They pretend that he was struck with panic. However this may be, he was nearly captured in the village of Saiyadwâla, and the desperate resistance of his Hindústání followers alone prevented the accident, and gave time to his elephant to be swam across the river. Ranjit Singh arriving soon after this victory, the whole army

marched to Pesháwer; and their presence produced the greatest misery to the city and country. It is probable that Pesháwer was at this time very flourishing, but now a sad reverse was to befal it. Part of the town, and the Bálla Hissár, so long the favourite residence of Shâh Sújáh, were destroyed, and a number of the gardens were cut down to supply the camp with fuel. The houses of the great were involved in ruin, the masjíts were desecrated, and the whole country ravaged. The Máhárajá suffered the Sirdárs to retain their territory, as had been promised by Búdh Singh, but he increased the amount of tribute, to be paid him in horses, swords, jewels, and the celebrated Bára rice, while he carried away with him, as hostage, the son of Yár Mâhomed Khân. The occasion of Ranjit Singh's first visit to Pesháwer, was when he defeated the attempt made by the Sirdár Máhomed Azem Khân to recover Káshmír, and the provinces west of the Indus, when the Máhárájá gallantly anticipated the attack by crossing the Indus, encountering and dispersing his host at Noshára, and marching on to Pesháwer.

From that period Pesháwer became tributary to him, and the Sirdárs were, to all intents and purposes, his vassals. He has established a system of sending annually large bodies of troops to the country, avowedly to receive his tributary offerings, but also, no doubt, to prevent it from reviving, and gaining its former consequence. This

works so oppressively that Yár Máhomed Khân, in 1828, remonstrated, and submitted, that if it were the Sirkár's pleasure that he should continue at Pesháwer, these annual visitations must cease; if otherwise, he should retire to his brother at Kâbal. Ranjit Singh replied, that he might remain, (aware that he had no idea of going,) and, to mortify him, directed that a horse, named Léla, to which a great name attached, should be sent to Lahore. Yár Máhomed Khân affirmed that he would as soon surrender one of his wives as the horse. Monsieur Ventura, an Italian officer, was sent to Pesháwer, with a force, to compel the delivery of the animal. The owner, Súḷtân Máhomed Khân, swore on the Korân that it was dead; and M. Ventura not being so interested in Léla as his royal master, believed the Sirdár, or affected to do so, and returned to Lahore. A short time afterwards Ranjit Singh was informed that Léla was alive, and the Italian was again sent off, in the midst of the rains, to bring Léla or Súltân Máhomed Khân to Lahore, in this instance without troops, or but with very few of them. Just at this period it occurred that Múlla Shakúr, envoy from Shâh Sújah al Múlkh, reached Lahore from Lúdiána, wishing to arrange for the recovery of Pesháwer and Kâbal for his master, who proposed to pay an immediate sum of three lakhs of rupees in cash and jewels, and hereafter an annual tribute. The Máhárájá refused to

listen to these terms, but took care to inform Yár Máhomed Khân of them, and threatened him, that if the annual presents were not doubled, and the horse Léla produced, he would send the king with an army to recover his states. The Italian officer had reached Pesháwer, on the mission for Léla, when the Saiyad Ahmed Shâh unexpectedly made a dash at Hashtnaggar, defeated the Sirdár Saiyad Máhomed Khân, and took the fortress. He then possessed himself of Killa Hind, a fort in the direction of Atak; and success increasing his confidence, and swelling the number of his followers, he again promised to become formidable. I had left Lahore, and was at Haidarabád in Sind, when the tidings of the Saiyad's victory reached there, and it was quite a holiday for the good people, who were expecting to be themselves invaded by a Síkh army, for Ranjit Singh had at this time seriously contemplated the subjection of Sind, and was making the necessary preparations. The first good news was followed by more, and it was known that the Saiyad had entered Pesháwer, and that the Sirdár Yár Máhomed Khân was slain; but the accounts varied in the detail of the mode in which these events were brought about. It afterwards proved that the Sirdár had marched to eject the Saiyad from Hind, and had been surprised by night and slain, and that the Saiyad had entered Pesháwer, the remaining three Sirdárs being compelled to evacuate it by the defection of Faizúlah Khân

Házárkhâní, but that he did not think prudent to retain it, and restored it to the Sirdárs on their agreeing to pay him one lákh of rupees, which a certain Molaví was left behind to receive. The Saiyad had scarcely retired when the Sirdárs slew the Molaví and Faizúlah Khân. Assistance was received both from Lahore and Kâbal; and finally the Saiyad's garrison at Hind was captured, and he was again driven within the limits of the Yúsaf Zai districts.

The train of events necessarily made the surviving Sirdárs more than ever dependent upon the mercy of Ranjit Singh, and it is needless to add, that the much coveted Léla was soon on his journey to Lahore, as was a son of Súltân Máhomed Khân, to replace as a hostage the son of his deceased brother.

The Yúsaf Zai tribes hold the country north of the course of the great Kâbal river, and have the river Indus for their eastern boundary, while on the west, they are neighbours of the Otman Zai Momands and of the tribes of Bájor. Immediately north of the first river are the Kamâl Zai, Amân Zai, and Rezzar tribes, holding the tract forming the north-eastern portion of the great plain of Pesháwer. To their west are the Bai Zais, a lawless tribe, and north of them the valleys of Sawât and Banír, with Pánchtáh; still farther north are the districts of Shamla, Dír, &c.; the whole being

a very fine country, productive in grain, and abounding in pasture, while it swarms with an intrepid race of men, distinguished not only for the spirit with which they defend their own country and freedom, but for the alacrity with which they enter into any contest in support or honour of their faith.

The level country between the Kâbal river and the hills to the north, has been overrun by Máhárájá Ranjit Singh, and a tribute fixed on the inhabitants of four rupees on every house, with a certain number of horses. No people have been more severely treated by that conqueror, yet his vengeance was brought down upon them by their own folly, but for which they might possibly have preserved independence. The first collision between the Síkhs and these rude but warlike people was in the disastrous expedition of the Sirdár Máhomed Azem Khân, when a levy of them was encountered by the Máhárájá himself on an eminence north of the river, and opposite to the Dúráni camp. The Yúsaf Zais were vanquished, and extinguished; but the gallantry of their defence made a serious impression on their victors, who perhaps would not willingly have sought again to involve themselves with a people from whom so little was to be gained, and victory so dearly purchased. The defeat of these Ghâzís, or champions of the faith, is always considered by Ranjit Singh as

one of his most memorable exploits. Subsequently, the course of operations against the Patáns of Ganghar led the Máhárájá to the eastern bank of the Indus, and the Yúsaf Zais on the opposite bank slaughtered cows, and insulted the Síkhs in the most aggravated manner. Ranjit Singh had not intended to cross the river, and probably the Yúsaf Zais imagined that he could not, owing to the rapidity of the current; but at length unable to control his anger he stroked his beard, and called upon his Síkhs to avenge the insults offered to their Gúrú. Monsieur Allard, present with his regiment of cavalry, not long before raised, strove to dissuade the Máhárájá from the attempt, but ineffectually, and was ordered himself to cross the river. The Síkhs gallantly obeyed the call of their prince, and precipitated themselves into the stream, but such was the violence of the current, that it is said the fearful number of twelve hundred were swept away. M. Allard mounted his elephant, and at the sound of his bugle the disciplined cavalry passed into the river, but in entire ranks, and the regularity and union of their movement enabled the regiment to cross with only three casualties. Ranjit Singh at once observed the advantages conferred by discipline, and in his delight commanded, on the spot, new levies. The Yúsaf Zais were panic-struck at the audacity of their once despised assailants, and fled without contesting the bank. An indiscriminate slaughter of man, woman, and child was

continued for some days. The miserable hunted wretches threw themselves on the ground, and placing a blade or tuft of grass in their mouths, cried out, "I am your cow." This act and exclamation, which would have saved them from an orthodox Hindú, had no effect with the infuriated Síkhs. A spectator of these exciting scenes described to me the general astonishment of the Síkhs at finding a fertile country covered with populous villages, and gave it as his opinion that had the Máhárájá profited by the consternation, which the passage of the river had caused throughout the country, he might have marched unopposed to Kâbal.

Of all the Afghân tribes the Yúsaf Zais possess, in greater perfection than any other, the peculiar patriarchal form of government; which, suitable for small and infant communities, is certainly inadequate for large and full-grown ones. While no people are more tenacious of their liberty and individual rights, the insufficiency of their institutions, under existing circumstances, operates so detrimentally upon their general interests that there is a strong tendency amongst them towards a change; a fact which must strike any one who has attentively watched their proceedings of late years. With the view of defending their liberties, they have been known to invite people of consideration to reside amongst them, proffering to make common cause with them, and to assign them a

tithe of the revenue of the country. It is clear that they were unconsciously anxious to surrender the liberty they so much prized, and to place themselves under the control of a single master. Such offers have been made to Sadú Zai princes, and Dost Máhomed Khân has been invited to send a son amongst them, under whom they would arm. To their feeling in this respect, as well as their religious enthusiasm, may be ascribed the fervour with which they have received Saiyad Ahmed Shâh, and the zeal they have demonstrated in his cause; which, besides being deemed that of Islám, is considered by them as that of their own freedom. To him they have yielded a tithe of the revenue, for the support of himself and followers, and have manifestly put him in the way of becoming their master, if he may not be considered so already. This Saiyad, after his signal defeat by the Síkhs, being no longer able to attempt any thing against them, directed his hostilities against the Dúrání Sirdárs of Pesháwer, whom he denounced as infidels, and as traitors to the cause of Islám. Upon Yár Máhomed Khân he conferred the name of Yárú Singh, and ordered that he should be so called in his camp. Whenever his means enabled him, he put the Khaibarís and other tribes in motion; while, from the Yúsaf-Zai plains, he threatened Hashtnaggar. By such a mode of warfare, although achieving little of consequence, he kept his enemies in constant un-

certainty and alarm. He paid his troops in Company's rupees; hence many supposed him an agent of the British Government. How and where he obtained his occasional supplies of money were equally inexplicable. He had with him a strong body of Hindústání Molavís and followers, who were his principal strength; and as auxiliaries, Báram Khân and Júma Khân, expatriated Khalíl arbábs of Pesháwer. They were both brave men, and Báram Khân had a high reputation, but were both very inimical to the Dúrání Sirdárs. Few men have created a greater sensation in their day than Saiyad Ahmed; and, setting aside his imposture or fanaticism, the talent must be considerable which has produced effects so wonderful, and which contrives to induce confidence in his mission after the reverses he has met with. Amongst the Patáns of Dáman and the countries east of the Indus, he is constantly prayed for, and fervent exclamations are uttered that God will be pleased to grant victory to Saiyad Ahmed. He also figures greatly in their songs. It is generally believed that he is a native of Bareilly in Upper Hindostân; and it appears certain that, for some years, he officiated as a múlla, or priest, in the camp of the notorious adventurer Amír Khân, respected for his learning and correct behaviour. At that time he made no pretensions to inspiration, and was only regarded in the light of an unassuming, inoffensive

person. He has now emissaries spread over all parts; and many Máhomedan princes and chiefs are said to furnish him with aid in money. Ranjit Singh has a very great dread of him; and I have heard it remarked, that he would readily give a large sum if he would take himself off; and it is also asserted that the Máhárájá cannot exactly penetrate the mystery with which the holy Saiyad enshrouds himself. I first heard of him at Bahâwalpúr, and was told of the large numbers who had passed through that city from Hindostân to join him. It was suspected that he was sent by the Sáhib loghs, by the vulgar, and I was often questioned on the point, but of course was unable to reply, for I could not conceive who the Saiyad was, or could be. As I proceeded up the banks of the Indus, parties, large and small, were continually passing me on the road, and I found that the name of Ahmed Shâh Ghází was in the mouth of every one. At Pesháwer the public opinion was universally in his favour, and I had a great desire to have passed over to the Yúsaf Zai country to have witnessed what was passing there; but the tales related of his sanctity and austerities deterred me, and I distrusted to place myself in the power of a host of Máhomedan bigots and fanatics. Afterwards, at Kândahár, I heard it broadly asserted that he was an impostor; and I found that well-informed persons were very

generally cognizant of the value to be attached to his pretensions.

My friend Sâleh Máhomed held a village, called Wadpaggar, about four miles from Peshâwer, on the road to Hashtnaggar. As the harvest was over, the presence of his men was necessary to receive their master's share of the produce; and, as some of them were stationed there, I also went and resided at the village, being glad to change the scene a little, and to escape from the pestilence raging in the city. I had often mentioned to Sâleh Máhomed my wishes to continue my journey; and he had entreated me to remain a little, on the plea of finding good company, and that the season of the simúm might pass over. While at Wadpaggar I was visited by a Patán of one of the neighbouring villages, who proffered to accompany me, even if I passed by the route of Khaibar, and I thought seriously of leaving so soon as I could see, and take leave of my host.

It chanced that the indefatigable Ahmed Shâh made another demonstration against Hashtnaggar, the third since I had been in these parts, and the Sirdár, Pír Máhomed Khân, with his troops, set off helter-skelter to oppose it. Sâleh Máhomed, of course, accompanied his master; but, as I was at the village, I had not been asked to go, and therefore remained. The Patán came nearly every day to call upon me; and I decided, at length, to

depart for Kâbal, and to run the chances of a journey through the pass of Khaibar.

I therefore left Wadpaggar for the village in which the Patán resided, as there also dwelt the family of Mír Kamaradín, whose people I had seen in Bannú. I was courteously received by Sádadín, the son of the Mír, and became his guest for the evening. He informed me, that his father, on account of the services he had rendered to Mr. Moorcroft, was greatly suspected by the sirdárs of Pesháwer, and was universally, but unjustly, supposed to be in receipt of a stipend from the British Government. He would have been pleased that I should have stayed with him some days, and very much wished me to accept assistance, both in money and garments, but I excused myself, as I had experienced I could do without the first, and as to the last, I had purposely abandoned what I had, to save the Khaibarís the trouble of taking them.

CHAPTER IX.

Routes.—Departure from Pesháwer.—Tope.—Jám.—Alí Masjít. Reception.—Diseases and remedies.—Entertainment.—Progress. —New patient.—Gharrí Lâla Bay.—Towers.—Civil welcome. —On what account.—Grave consultation.—Prescription.—Repast.—Alladád Khân.—His sister.—Obstinate Khaibarí.—Tope.—Robbers.—Rifled by them.—Their strict search.—Farther progress.—Haftcháhí—Dáka.—Ancient remains.—Tribes of Khaibar.—Tírah and Chúra.—Khân Bahâdar Khân. —Nánáwâtis.—Ancient allowances.—Numbers.—Shâh Rasúl Shâh.—Inundation of Ranjit Singh's camp.

FROM Pesháwer to the valley of Jelálabád there are three distinct kâfíla routes, all of them leading through the great hill ranges separating the two countries, viz. those of Khaibar, Abkhâna and Karapa. The former is decidedly the preferable, from its level character and directness, but the most dangerous, owing to the lawless disposition of the predatory tribes inhabiting it. It is therefore seldom frequented, and only by fáquírs, or large bodies of troops; kâfilas of traders, and others, passing by the more difficult and tedious, but at the same time the more secure routes of Abkhâna and Karapa.

With my Patán companion I started before daybreak, taking with me, besides my mean apparel, nothing but a small book and a few pais, or half-

pence, which, the better to elude observation, were put into a small earthern water vessel. My Patán carried with him two or three cakes of bread, to be provided in case of inhospitable reception, hardly to be expected, and a knife, which he tied in the band of his peyjámas, or trowsers.

Our course led due west, and four or five cosses brought us to Tákkâl, the last village in this direction belonging to Pesháwer, and where the cultivated lands cease. We halted but for a few minutes, and entered upon a barren, stony plain, extending to the hills. To our right was a large artificial mound, called the Pádshâh's Tope, near which the last battle was fought between Shâh Sújah and Azem Khân, brother of the Vazír Fatí Khân, when the former being defeated, fled to Khaibar. In crossing the plain, about mid-way we came upon a Dúrání chokí, or guard station, where were some half dozen horsemen on the look out. Nearing the hills, we approached the small village of Jám, at the entrance of the pass, surrounded by a low wall of stones, cemented with mud. It may contain fifty or sixty houses, but has no bazár or resident Hindú. We did not deem it prudent to enter the village, and halted during the heat of the day at an enclosed zíárat, or shrine of a saiyad, or other saintly character, which lies a little to the right. Here was a masjít, a grateful shade from a few trees, and a well of indifferent water.

When the fervour of the sun had abated, we con-

tinued our journey, but avoiding the high road to our left, which is practicable for artillery, we entered the hills, taking a foot-path. After passing for some time over a succession of small rounded hills, covered with many novel plants and shrubs, and particularly with sorrel, we descended into a deep, but spacious water-course, down which flowed a fine clear rivulet from the west, and there we fell in with the high road which led up it. In this distance we had passed a scanty spring of water, over which numerous wasps were buzzing. They good-naturedly allowed us to drink without annoyance. Hitherto we had neither met nor seen any person. Proceeding up the water-course we at length reached a spot where the water supplying the rivulet gushes in a large volume from the rocks to the left. I slaked my thirst in the living spring, and drank to repletion of the delightfully cool and transparent waters. This locality is called Alí Masjít, and is connected, by tradition, with Házrat Alí, who, it is believed, repeated prayers here, besides performing more wonderful feats. Over the spot where the Házrat stood in the act of devotion a masjít is erected, whence the appellation of the place.

Immediately adjacent hereto were some twenty men assembled, sitting in the shade of the rocks; most of them were elderly, and of respectable venerable aspect. Our salutations were acknowledged; and after replying to their queries, as to

who we were, where we were going, and on what business, they invited us to pass the night with them, telling us that we should indeed find a village a little further on, but nearly bare of inhabitants, who had come hither with their flocks, as is their custom, at a certain period of the year. To this village they themselves belonged. We willingly accepted the invitation, and sitting down with them, I became an object of much curiosity, and, as I had conjectured, on leaving Pesháwer, my European birth did not prove to my disadvantage. They spoke nothing but Pashto, and were amused that I was unable to speak it as well as themselves. My conversation was maintained with them through the medium of my Patán interpreter. The news of the arrival of a Farang, or European soon spread, and many persons came, afflicted with disorders and wounds.

I could not forbear regretting that I had no knowledge of medicinal remedies, as I should have been gratified to have administered to the wants of these poor people, whose reception of me had so fully belied the reports of their neighbours. I asserted my ignorance of the art of healing, but was not credited; and finding it impossible to avoid prescribing, or to be considered unkind, I took upon myself to recommend such simple appliances as might be useful, while they could do no harm. I particularly enjoined cleanliness, which in all their maladies seemed to be neglected from principle.

For an affection of the eye I contrived a shade, which was much admired, and prized as a singular effort of ingenuity. There were three or four cases of sword wounds; in which I advised the removal of the unseemly applications placed on them, to keep them clean, and thereby to allow nature to take her course. Their plasters were made of mud and salt, a mixture which may or may not be judicious, but which I afterwards found was very generally used in all cases of wounds. I presume it to be, if not hurtful in the first instance, of doubtful benefit after a certain time, for nothing is more common than to see wounds continue open after any danger from them is over, apparently owing to the repulsive agency of the dirt crammed into them.

I received many thanks for my prescriptions, and sat with the company until the approach of night, smoking the chillam, and listening to their conversation, at which I appeared to be much pleased, although I understood but little of it. They pointed to an eminence, on which they told me Shâh Sújah had passed the night after his defeat at Tákkâl.

We now ascended the hills, and on the tabular summit of one of them found the inhabitants of the village in a bivouac. There were but three khâts, or couches of these countries, amongst them, yet one was abandoned to me, it being urged that I was a Farang, and had prescribed medicines. My

companion received a mat. As night advanced, a supper was brought of wheaten cakes, roghan, and milk. The chillam also was furnished, and three or four young men came and sat with me, around my khât, until I felt disposed to sleep, and on being dismissed, they asked me, if during the night they should bring the chillam.

Such was the attention I received from these savages; and I am pleased to record it, as affording an opportunity of doing justice to hospitality and kindness, and as it opposes an agreeable contrast to the treatment I have experienced amongst other barbarous tribes. In the morning my eyes opened upon my friends of the preceding evening, who, anxious to anticipate my wants, were ready with the eternal chillam and a bowl of buttermilk. My departure that day was unwillingly consented to.

Proceeding through the darra, or valley, which now widened, and was plentifully garnished with stunted trees, we met two men of the wildest appearance, running in great haste, with the matches of their firelocks kindled, and without covering to their heads. They said they were in search of their enemies, who had paid them a visit in the night. We passed each other, and soon after beheld a man running after us. He was also armed with a matchlock. We were at first dubious as to his intentions, but on his overtaking us, it proved that he had no other motive than to persuade me to

look at a sister, who was lying sick in the village, to which we were now near.

I could not but consent, and found a miserable being in the last stage of declining nature. I was told that she had been three years in so deplorable a state. All I could do was to recommend attention to her regimen, and obedience to her wishes whatever they might be, that the few remaining days of her earthly sojourn might pass as serenely as possible under the circumstances of her case.

This village, called Gharí Lâla Beg, contained perhaps eighty to one hundred houses, composed of mud and stones, and had a substantially constructed búrj, or tower.

Leaving Gharí Lâla Beg, we entered a plain of perhaps two miles in circumference, on which I counted twenty-four circular and rather lofty towers; to each of them was attached one or more family residences. Such is the nature of society here, that the inhabitants, oppressed with mutual feuds, frequently carry on hostilities from tower to tower, most of which are within musket-shot of each other. These erections also serve them to secure their properties, in case of an inroad upon them, or on the march of troops through their country, as they are sufficient against cavalry, or any arm but artillery. On our road we were accosted by two youths, who begged us to proceed to a house

to the left of our path. We were civilly received by a sturdy young man, who instantly produced a cake of bread, and, as usual, the chillam. He had heard of my arrival in Khaibar, and was overjoyed that I had come to his house, hoping, it turned out, to profit by my medical skill. The skin of my new client was plentifully sprinkled with eruptive blotches or pimples. He appeared extremely anxious for my advice, yet showed a delicacy in asking it, as if fearful I might not confer upon him so much favour. On telling him that I thought something might be done for him he was almost frantic with joy, and expressed his gratitude with much earnestness and eloquence. His father now arrived, a man of respectable appearance and benign features. He was glad to see me, and asked what I considered to be the nature of his son's complaint; adding, and pointing at the same time to his stores piled around the apartment in carpet bags, that he would give all he possessed were his son's disorder removed. I informed him, that I supposed the blotches were occasioned by heat and impurity of blood, and that they would gradually disappear if his son took medicine. The old man seized my hand, and asked me if I was certain of his son's disease; I replied nearly so. He was delighted, and told me, that it was believed in the valley that his son had the Bád Farang, or venereal affection, that he was shunned by his neighbours as unclean, and that

his wife, the daughter of one of them, had been taken from him on that account, and now lived with her father. I assured them I had no idea that the disorder was the one suspected, and recommended the use of such remedies as could be easily procured. I thought it possible the eruption might be the itch, or something analogous; and my Patán prepared a mixture of roghan and sulphur, with which he undertook to anoint the patient. He did so, and rather roughly, for he first tore down the skin with his nails until blood appeared, and then rubbed in the ointment. The young man said, that when he ran about his face became flushed and intolerably red, and every one pointed at him. I directed him not to run about, to keep himself quiet, and take simple medicines, and gave him the hope he would speedily be better.

We were treated with kindness by the old man, whose name was Khair Máhomed, and he would not allow us to depart until we had partaken of a repast of cakes and butter. His wives prepared the food, set it before us, and attended upon us. He wished us to stay the day, but we decided to go on.

We had scarcely regained the high road when we were hailed by some people sitting beneath one of the towers. On going to them, I was asked to advise for one of them, who had a pain in his belly. I directed the employment of the seeds of panírband, (a plant growing abundantly in the

hills,) which are much prized in many countries for their salutary virtues, and which I had found serviceable in a similar affliction. A man was despatched to procure some, and soon returned with a quantity of them, which, having identified to be the genuine thing, I departed. We again followed the road, and approached the last house in the plain, enclosed within square walls, but without a tower. Observing three or four persons seated at the gateway, we went towards them, deeming it advisable, that it might not be supposed we were clandestinely passing. We saluted with the ordinary "Salám Alíkam," and received the invariable responsive gratulation of "Alíkam Salám." We found the house to be the abode of Alladád Khân, one of the most influential men in the valley, and known, both in and out of it, by the name of Alladád Khân Chirssi, being a great smoker of chirs, a deleterious composition of hemp-resin. He said, he recognized me to be a Farang in the distance, by my step; and, asserting that some day his country would be under European authority, begged me to remember him if it should so happen in his time or mine. I had here to personate a physician for the last time, my patient being either the wife or the sister of Alladád Khân. She was in the last stage of atrophy, or decline. I was asked if I thought it probable she would recover; I replied in the negative, as the disorder had grown superior to earthly remedies, and that God

only could effect a cure. My host, who was a man of sense, agreed with me; and, after smoking the chillam, I departed.

Not far from this house we were met by a man, who, observing the water-vessel carried by my companion, asked for water. It will be remembered that in this vessel were the pais, or copper money we had with us. The Patán told him that his people were near, and that we had far to go, and might not find water; but the savage insisted that he would drink. Other reasons were urged in vain, and finally, the one that the vessel and water belonged to me, who was not a Músulmân. The man then swore he would drink if it killed him. The Patán, finding him obstinate, desired him to place his hand under his mouth, into which he poured the water, and so dexterously that the pais were not discovered; the fellow drank, and went satisfied away. I know not, however, how the fluid, in which thirty or forty pais had been soaking for as many hours, may have afterwards agreed with his stomach or digestive powers.

In this small plain is another of those monuments, called the Pádshâh's Topes. It is in good preservation, and consists of a massive rectangular basement, on which rests a cylindrical body, terminating in a dome or cupola; it is erected on the summit of an eminence. I have noted the existence of another in the plain of Pesháwer, and I have heard of others in the Panjâb. The inha-

bitants of these parts refer these structures to former Pádshâhs, or kings, sometimes to Ahmed Shâh, but I judge their antiquity to be remote. The stones employed in the Khaibar monument are of very large dimensions, and the whole has a grand and striking aspect.

At the western extremity of the plain is a burial ground, and the surface of the soil is a little broken. Making a slight turn in the hills, we entered another plain, of much the same extent, inhabited by Shínwârís. The people who had so much need of medicine, were Afrédís. The houses here were enclosed in walls of roughly cemented stones, such erections being substituted for the circular towers of their neighbours. We left these houses to the right, and had traversed the extent of the plain, and were about to descend from it into the valley or defile beneath, by a small pass called Landí Khâna, when two men, with kârds, or long knives, in their hands, rushed upon us from the rocks, and stopped our progress. Neither of us had before seen these fellows, who pounced upon us as if from the clouds. One of them, with a peculiarly evil countenance, proceeded to rifle my companion, and the other, milder favoured, examined me. The pocket knife of the Patán was soon wrenched from the band of his trowsers, and my cháddar, a long piece of cloth I wore loosely thrown over my shoulder, was taken. In one corner of this was my book, which, as well as I could, I signified to my

despoiler, and told him it was múlla-kí-kítáb, a múlla's, or a pious book. He untied it, and returned it to me. I thereupon shook his hand; on which he was also willing to have returned my cháddar, but his fiercer colleague would not permit him. This fellow fancying I had been too leniently examined, left the Patán and came to me, and very severely scrutinized me. He found nothing, but clearly did not know what to make of me, my colour probably perplexing him. At the onset my Patán had put the water-vessel containing the pais on the ground. This did not escape the vigilance of the sharper of the ruffians, who took out a tuft of grass inserted in its mouth as a stopper, very carefully observed it, and then replaced it, but not thinking of taking up the vessel, he missed the copper money. He also made the Patán untie the package containing the cakes of bread, and on finding what they were, he shook his head, implying that he did not rob bread. A comb, taken from one of us, was also returned. At the close of the affair a youth joined, alike armed with a long knife. About to leave, my companion expressing his anger rather too honestly for the occasion, and comparing our treatment with that we had met with from the Afrédís, knives were brandished, and many threatenings uttered. I desired my Patán to forbear useless reproaches, and the milder of the robbers deprecating violence, we departed. I was surprised at this adventure, inasmuch as I had been given to

understand that if I could pass unmolested through the Afrédís, there was less to be dreaded from the Shínwârís, who from their commercial pursuits are not so savage. These people breed numbers of mules, and are engaged in the carrying-trade.

We had not gained the valley, when we were hailed by other armed men, tending flocks of goats on the hills, and had we not been plundered before, we must have resisted, or submitted to it here. As it was, they did not come to us, my Patán holding up is packet and hallooing Dáodí, or bread, and I showing my book, and shouting out Múlla-kí-kítáb. In our passage along the valley we were ordered to halt by fellows on the ridges of the hills, but they were too distant to cause us apprehension, or to induce us to comply, so we allowed them to bawl away unheeded. We at length reached a spot where a rivulet crossed our track. The water was excellent, and there was a small plot of rice. Here an armed man presented himself. He looked very suspicious, and undecided whether to interfere with us or not, but let us go in peace. From this place the valley widened, and we passed the ruins of rather an extensive fort, constructed on an eminence or mound in the midst of it. Near it are a series of wells, of small depth, in two or three of which only we found a very little water. The fortress is called Haftcháhí, or the seven wells, and is probably one of the old Chághatai castles, so numerously erected in these countries for the protection

of the roads. It is said to be a dangerous spot in the season of hot winds, which rage here with fatal fury.

From Haftcháhí, the valley, much more open, became sandy, and so continued until we reached Dáka, a small fort and village dependent on Jelálabád. Evening had overtaken us before we cleared the darra, and it was night when we reached Dáka. We still found the people seated in a circle near the masjít, and although it was too late for a regular repast to be prepared, barley cakes were brought us, which were so disagreeable that I could not eat them.

Throughout the whole extent of the pass, or darra of Khaibar, on the crest of hills, there are the remains of ancient forts and buildings, whose extent, neatness, and solidity of structure, evince that their founders must have been much more enlightened and opulent than the present inhabitants of these countries. The usual reply to any question as to their origin is, that they were built by infidels or by demons. There are some of them of remarkable extent, and they must have been once most important works. I much regretted the impossibility of closely inspecting them. There are also amongst these hills a great number of artificial caves.

I missed my cháddar at night, for its employment was to cover me when I slept, yet, on the whole, I was pleased with my passage through Khaibar. My companion had instructed me on all occasions to

appear pleased and cheerful, a salutary counsel, and one which stood me in good stead, as did the indication of perfect tranquillity, and most implicit confidence in the good faith of those I fell in with.

KHAIBARI TRIBES.

Of the Khaibar tribes there are three great divisions, the Afrédís, the Shínwârís, and the Orak Zais. Of these, the Afrédís, in their present locality, are the more numerous; the Shínwârís, more disposed to the arts of traffic; and the Orak Zais, the more orderly, if amongst such people any can be so pronounced. The Afrédís occupy the eastern parts of the hills, nearest Pesháwer; and the Shínwârís the western parts, looking upon the valley of Jelálabád. The Orak Zais reside in Tírah, intermingled with the Afrédís, and some of them are found in the hills south-west of Pesháwer. It was a malek of this tribe who conducted Nádir Shâh, and a force of cavalry, by the route of Chúra and Tírah, to Pesháwer, when the principal road through the hills was defended against him. The Shínwârís, besides their portion of the hills, have the lands immediately west of them, and some of the valleys of the Saféd Koh range. More westernly still, under the same hill range, they are found south of Jelálabád, and are there neighbours of the Khogânís. These are in the condition of unruly subjects. There are also some of them in Ghorband, and they dwell in great numbers bordering on

Bájor to the north-west, where they are independent, and engaged in constant hostilities with the tribes of Bájor and of Káfristân.

Tírah and Chúra are said to be fertile and well-peopled valleys, enjoying a cool climate, in comparison with that of Pesháwer; and it is not unusual for the sirdárs, and others, who have an understanding with the inhabitants, to pass the warm weather in the former of these places; which has also frequently become a place of refuge to the distressed. At Chúra resides Khân Bahâdar Khân, Afrédí, who attained eminence amongst his tribe from the circumstance of his attendance at court during the sway of the Sadú Zais. Shâh Sújah married one of his daughters, and has, on more than one occasion, found an asylum with him. The Khaibarís, like other rude Afghân tribes, have their maleks, or chiefs, but the authority of these is very limited; and as every individual has a voice on public affairs, it is impossible to describe the confusion that exists amongst them. Of course, unanimity is out of the question, and it generally happens that a nánáwâtí, or deliberation on any business, terminates not by bringing it to a conclusion, but in strife amongst themselves. The portions of the Afrédí and Shínwârí tribes who inhabit the defiles of Khaibar, through which the road leads from Pesháwer to the Jelálabád valley, are but inconsiderable as to numbers, but they are extremely infamous on account of their ferocity, and their long-indulged habits of rapine. Under the

Sadú Zai princes they received an annual allowance of twelve thousand rupees on condition of keeping the road through their country open, and abstaining from plunder. They called themselves, therefore, the Núkarân, or servants of the king. It would appear, from every statement, that they were in those days little scrupulous. Still, kâfilas followed their road,—so manifestly the better and nearer one,—submitting to their exactions and annoyances, and satisfied with being not wholly rifled. Their stipend being discontinued by the Bárak Zai Sirdárs,—to whom the attachment they evinced to Shâh Sújah has rendered them very suspicious,—they have thrown off all restraint, and the consequence has been that the Khaibar road is closed to the traders of Peshâwer and Kâbal.

They are, in the mass, very numerous, and it is boasted that the Afrédí tribe can muster forty thousand fighting-men,—of course an improbable number,—or one which might be presumed to include every man, woman, and child amongst them. On various occasions, when their strength has been exhibited, from two to five thousand men have assembled. At Jám, a little village at the entrance of the pass on the Pesháwer side, resides, generally, Shâh Rasúl Shâh, a nephew, as he pretends to be, of the notorious Saiyad Ahmed Shâh; and in quality of his agent. At the time of my visit he, as well as many of the village people, had fled into the hills, apprehensive of an attack from the Sirdárs of

Peshäwer. When Saiyad Ahmed Shâh has funds, he can always command the services of two or three thousand Khaibarís, the most desperate and needy of the tribes. Upon Ranjít Singh's excursion to Peshäwer, the Khaibarís opened the bands, or barriers, of the Bára river, and inundated his camp by night. They were on the alert, and profited by the consequent confusion to carry off much spoil and many horses. The Máhárájá was chagrined, and in the morning summoned the Peshäwer Sirdárs, who asserted that it was not their deed; and then he precipitately left for Lahore, having made only a stay of three days.

CHAPTER X.

Dáka.—Hazár Noh.—Bassowal.—Albino.—Caves.—Ancient vestiges.—Ambhár Khâna.—Goshter.—Báttí Kot.—Koh Sang Súrákh.— Tope. —Ghirdí Kach.— Kámeh.—Alí Bâghân.— Júí Shâhí.— Khalíl Khân.— His attentions.— Síáposh Kâfrs.— Abdúl Ganní Khân.—Duráni lady.—Khalíl Khân a politician. —Political movements.—Abdúl Ganní Khân's measures.—Parting with Khalíl Khân.—Jelálabád.—Máhomed Zemân Khân— His character—Revenue and force—His political bias.—Province of Jelálabád.—Nawâb Jabár Khân.—Audience of him—His civility.—Molávi and Bráhman.—Their profession.—Leave Jelálabád.— Plain of Jelálabád.— Rivers.— Bálla Bâgh.— Súrkh Rúd.—Valley.—Adínapúr.—Intended robbery.—Súrkh Púl.— Hávízângâní.—Malek of Fattíabád.—Mulberries.—Advice requested.—Change in climate and scenery.—Book lost.—Kotal Karkacha.—Tézí.— Haft Kotal.— Tchakrí.— Fossil shells.— Khúrd Kâbal.—Killah Mohsan.—Bíní Sár.

I HAVE noted my arrival at Dáka. This village, situated about half a mile from the great river of Jelálabád, is also at the western entrance of the pass of Khaibar. The Ab-khâna route, to and from Peshâwer, alike commences and terminates at it. From its position, it is therefore a constant kâfila stage, and is the station of a guard of Momands, who levy transit fees on passengers and merchandize. There are two villages of the name, Kalân and Khúrd, or the great and little. The last is passed

on the Ab-khâna route. We had halted at the former.

We left Dáka at daybreak, and for some time passed over a well cultivated plain, until we made the small village of Ghirdí, seated immediately on the river. Hence the road led through low, bare hills to Hazár Noh, (the thousand canals,) a large straggling village, placed on the brink of small eminences, which fringe the plain stretching from them to the river. Hazár Noh is considered equidistant from Dáka and Bassowal, and four cosses from each. The high road skirts the plain to the south, extending beneath the eminences on which the village stands, but we followed a path intermediate between it and the river, and intersecting the plain, which together with marshes, has a great proportion of meadow, and land cultivated with rice. This plain, throughout its whole extent, is most copiously provided with water, gurgling from innumerable springs, at the line where the eminences to the left blend with it. At Bassowal we found an enclosed village, and two or three agricultural castles. We were hospitably entertained at the village; and the people brought a young female Albino that I might see her, jocosely remarking that she must be a Feringhí, and in the same mood recommending me to take her with me.

Opposite to Bassowal, which is close upon the river, very high steep hills confine the stream, and at their eastern extremity are a series of caves, with

triangular entrances. The spot is called Chakanúr, and there are, besides, many other vestiges of antiquity there. Bassowal appears to occupy an ancient site, and has some venerable tamarisk trees, the remains of its antique groves. The same kind of memorials also distinguish the vicinity of Ghirdí. Between Bassowal and Már Koh (the snake hill), which occurs about three miles west of it, the soil is strewed with fragments of potters ware, and similar indications are seen all round the southern termination of the hill, even so far as Báttí Kot, a distance perhaps of five miles.

We left Bassowal in the evening, but instead of following the high road, which passes by Báttí Kot, and thence by Súrkh Dewâl to Alí Bâghân and Jelálabád, we took a pleasanter, and possibly a shorter one, tracing chiefly the river bank. Beyond Bassowal we crossed a marsh full of reeds, and then, by a short and open passage through the hill Már Koh, we arrived at Ambhár Khâna, a small village on the river. Hence we traversed the plain of Chahár Déh (the four villages) for four or five miles, and again approached hills, which, like Már Koh, close upon the river. Opposite to Chahár Déh, across the stream, is the small and bare looking district of Goshter, into which the Karapa road from Pesháwer conducts. A few naked castles are sprinkled over the plain ascending to the hills; and there resides Fattúlah Khân Momand, a chief of less consequence than Sâdat Khân of Lâlpúra, and less respected.

South of the plain of Chahár Déh is the village of Báttí Kot, famed for the zíarat of Akhúnd Músa, in virtue of whose holy benediction the snakes, numerously found on Mar Koh,—which derives its name from the circumstance,—are believed to have been rendered harmless. I might have noticed, that at Ghirdí is a celebrated zíarat of a saint, who was as much in his element when in the water as a fish, for it is credited that he would dive into the river at Ghirdí and re-appear at Atak.

The path from Chahár Déh winds around the hills, overlooking the fine stream. Practicable to footmen, it is difficult to horsemen, who in some places are compelled to dismount. At one spot there is a súrâkh, or aperture, for some distance through the rock, whence the whole of the hills are often called Koh Sang Súrâkh (the hill of the perforated rock), and the same name is applied to the path. We came opposite to another of those monuments called Topes, seated on an eminence. It was very picturesque, and the scenery was so agreeable that my Patán companion asked me if there were any spots so charming in my country. A little beyond, or north of this Tope, a branch from the hills bounding Goshter terminates in a point, which from the white colour of the rock is called Saféd Bíní (the white nose, that is, projection). The hill itself yields steatite, to which its colour is due. About a mile hence we came to a village called Ghirdí Kach, located pleasantly in a small amphitheatrical recess of the

hills, which in the neighbourhood produce asbestus. We passed the night here in a masjít. The people supplied us with food, but did not seem to be well pleased that I was not a Músulmân.

The next morning we continued our route, still leading along the river bank. On the opposite side was the district of Kámeh, which had commenced from Saféd Bíní. It is abundantly garnished with castles, villages, and gardens, and has a good deal of cultivation. It is much more extensive than Goshter, and to the west is described by the river of Khonar and Chitrâl, called here the Kámeh, which divides it from Bísút. Clearing at length the hills named indifferently Kôh Sang Súrâkh, or Kôh Alí Bâghân, we reached the village of the latter name, seated on rising ground, and about a mile from the river. Here we halted during mid-day in a tamarisk grove, where some weavers of lúnghís were engaged in their business. At this village, called also Sammah Khél, is a shrine, to which lunatics are brought, it being believed that in virtue of the benediction of the saint interred here, they recover their reason.

In the evening we started, intending to reach Jelálabád, some eight or nine miles distant. We chose a path between the high road and the course of the river, which led through a low tract overspread with marshes full of flags, and with pasture land. We had passed the point where the Kámeh river falls into the river of Jelálabád, and

had the district of Bísút on the opposite side of the river, when reaching a small village, Júí Shâhí, (the royal canal,) we were invited by a party sitting under the shade of some trees, to rest awhile. The chief man proved to be Khalíl Khân, a Baiyát, and farmer of the customs of Jelálabád under the Nawâb Máhomed Zemân Khân. He told me that he lived in Bísút, and was so urgent that I should spend two or three days with him that I consented. In the evening we were ferried across the stream in a boat, and I found the Khân's castle, a very neat and commodious one, seated amid the most luxuriant fields of sugar-cane and lucerne, and with good gardens, and fine groves of trees attached. In the immediate neighbourhood were many other handsome castles, and the country around seemed quite a garden. The heat was the only drawback, which, although oppressive, did not appear to produce sickness, nor did it absolutely prevent a person from moving about freely during the day. Khalíl Khân and his family were most kind and civil. In the day-time they would sit with me under the shade of the mulberry-trees, and in the evening the youths of the contiguous hamlets would exhibit their rural sports and games, which were manly enough, but rough withal. I wished to make inquiries about the Síáposh Kâfrs; and various people, Hindú and Máhomedan, were brought, who pretended to have some knowledge of them. I heard their wonderful and incongruous accounts, but

benefited little by what I heard. As so great an interest, however, is entertained respecting these races, the succeeding chapter will be devoted to set forth such information as I have since acquired with reference to them.

I had remained two or three days at Khalíl Khân's castle, when a messenger from Abdúl Ganní Khân, one of his neighbours, came and entreated that I would step over to his castle. I did so; and found that the Khân's object was to procure my advice for his young son, who had recently become deaf. I explained that I knew nothing of diseases, but was scarcely credited. They much wished to put something into the ears, and protesting that I did not dare to interfere with so tender an organ, I besought them to employ no violent remedies. The mother of Abdúl Ganní Khân, a most respectable Dúráni lady, gave me an interview. She was unveiled, and held an ivory-mounted cane in her hand. She expressed much solicitude that her grandson should recover his hearing. I suggested that benefit might arise from warmth, and protecting the parts from air, but I suspect it was little conceited that remedies so simple could be of use. At this meeting I was regaled with a profusion of grapes and melons, and I was not allowed to return to Khalíl Khân's castle for a day or two, being detained as a guest. Abdúl Ganní Khân, who was a Bárak Zai, and relative of the ruling sirdárs in Afghânistân, had a handsome seignorial castle, with

all necessary appurtenances, as became a man of his rank and condition.

My friend Khalíl Khân was a violent politician, and indulged frequently in severe diatribes against the Nawâb Máhomed Zemân Khân, whom he represented as an incapable ruler, and as little better than an old woman. Abdúl Ganní Khân had also while I resided with him an opportunity of displaying his political bias, and I was surprised to discover that within three miles of Jelálabád, he was not only inimical to the Nawâb, whose relative he was, and whose subject I should have considered him to be, but that he was in the interest of the Pesháwer Sirdárs. I have in other places mentioned the coalition of the Sirdárs of Pesháwer and Kândahár with the object of humbling Dost Máhomed Khân, and that the Pesháwer army was to move upon Jelálabád. Sufficient reasons had prevented its march, but the idea was not abandoned. Now it seemed the Kândahár army had moved, or was about to move upon Ghazni and Kâbal. Dost Máhomed Khân had summoned Máhomed Zemân Khân to attend him. His absence leaving the Jelálabád province bare of troops, the Nawâb Jabár Khân, governor of the Ghiljís between Kâbal and Jelálabád, was appointed to protect it from invasion on the side of Pesháwer; and tidings were at this time brought to Abdúl Ganní Khân that he had arrived with his troops at Jelálabád. The khân immediately ordered the ferry-boats to be secured, avow-

ing, that he would not allow Jabár Khân's soldiery to cross the river, and pillage his raiyats. Some persons asked the khân, whether he was not acting precipitately, and he replied that the Pesháwer army would arrive in a day or two, strong in cavalry and guns, and that there was nothing to fear. He then went into the country to concert measures; and I found that he had two other brothers in Bísút, holding their jaghírs under the Nawâb, but no more friendly to him than was Abdúl Ganní Khân.

While the latter was absent I returned to Khalíl Khân, but could not cross the river, as a guard was stationed over the ferry-boats. I was not then aware that by passing higher up on the same side of the stream, there were other ferries beyond the Bísút district. After a farther stay with Khalíl Khân, he having himself business which required him to cross the river, it was arranged to make a jâla, or float, of inflated skins; and on it we passed. I took farewell of the friendly Khân, who strove to induce me to accept clothes, money and horses, but I forbore to trespass on his bounty. I was sorry to have learned during my abode with him, that his affairs were embarrassed; and that his anger with Máhomed Zemân Khân was principally owing to the latter being apt to require, as Khalíl Khân thought, unreasonably, an adjustment of his long unsettled accounts.

We soon reached Jelálabád, which we entered

by the eastern gate, after having passed the decayed, yet very obvious ramparts, of two former towns, whose site is now occupied by the present town, the smallest of the three. Enclosed within mud walls, it has but an indifferent appearance, yet its bazar now exhibited much activity, being filled with the soldiery of the Nawâb Jabár Khân.

The fine and productive province of Jelálabád is held by the Nawâb Máhomed Zemân Khân, son of the Nawâb Assad Khân, who died in the government of Déra Ghází Khân, in which he was succeeded by his son, who thence acquired the title of Nawâb. He is, consequently, a nephew to Dost Máhomed Khân, and the Sirdárs of Kândahár and Pesháwer. He was expelled from Déra Ghází Khân by Samandar Khân, Popal Zai, who took possession of the place in the name of Shâh Máhmúd; and Máhomed Zemân Khân then joined Shâh Súján al Múlkh, who was at that time advancing from Bahâwalpúr, having been invited from Lúdiána by the Sirdár Máhomed Azem Khân. Samandar Khân was with some difficulty driven from Déra Ghází Khân, and Máhomed Zemân Khân followed the Shâh to Pesháwer, where quarrelling with the Sirdár Máhomed Azem Khân, the monarch fought a battle, was defeated, and presently became a fugitive.

I know not exactly in what manner he acquired the government of Jelálabád, but conjecture that

he held it during the authority of Máhomed Azem Khân at Kâbal, as in the Sirdár's expedition against the Síkhs he was despatched to raise levies in the Yúsaf Zai country. His interest, however, in the family was always considerable, and the Vazír Fattí Khân united his daughter to him. He is said to be very wealthy, but is by no means generally respected for ability. He appears to be deficient in firmness, and rules with too lax a hand. Placed over restless and turbulent subjects, he has no energy to control them; and it would seem his averseness to cruelty prevents him from repressing disorders or punishing the guilty. It is unfortunate that the qualities which are amiable in the private individual, should be errors in the ruler, but they do so operate in Máhomed Zemân Khân's case, and his authority is despised because it is not feared.

The revenue of Jelálabád, including that from the Tâjik villages and lands of Lúghmân, amounts, it is said, to above three lakhs of rupees, and might be largely increased. The Sirdár keeps up but a limited military establishment, and, in case of need, generally employs the íljárí, or militia of the country, which he can assemble to the extent of two or three thousand men. He can also call upon the services of the petty saiyad chiefs of Khonar, and of Sâdat Khân, the Momand chief of Lâlpúr. He has six pieces of artillery, not in very good order.

Although an ally of Dost Máhomed Khân, he is

supposed to have a bias towards the Sirdárs of Pesháwer; and the connection, it is thought, will become closer. He provides for many members of the Bárak Zai family, by giving them lands and villages, and Jelálabád affords an asylum to some whose political misdemeanours have made it necessary for them to abandon Kâbal.

The province of Jelálabád extends from the Kotal of Jigdillak to Dáka, in a line from west to east. To the south, the great range of Saféd Koh divides it from Khúram, and to the north a series of hills, of nearly equal elevation, separates it from Kâfristân and Bájor. Dáka, the eastern point, is at the entrance of the celebrated pass of Khaibar, which leads through the hills of the Khaibar tribes to Pesháwer. The beautiful valley of Jelálabád is extremely well watered, and besides the Súrkh Rúd and Kârasú, with a number of rivulets which flow from the Saféd Koh, the great river of Kâbal glides through it, receiving in its course the united river of Lúghmân, composed of the streams of Alíshang and Alingár, and lower down the fine river of Kámeh, Khonar and Chitrál. These rivers flow from the north, and have their sources remote from this part of the country. The climate of Jelálabád is remarkably diversified. The winter season is particularly delightful, although subject to violent wind storms; and in the summer, while in the centre of the valley, or along the course of the river, the heat is excessive, the skirts of the Saféd

Koh contain a number of cool and agreeable spots to which the inhabitants may retire.

I was no sooner recognized at Jelálabád to be a Feringhí than many hastened to inform the nawâb of my arrival, that popular chief being notorious for his good feelings towards Europeans. In a short time his people were with me, requesting me to wait upon him. I was not then particularly acquainted with his history, but had heard it frequently remarked at Pesháwer, that there, Súltân Máhomed Khân was the Feringhí's friend; and at Kâbal, the Nawâb Jabár Khân. I was not in the best trim to appear before the good nawâb, or before any other person, yet I had discovered that Afghâns are not particular as to trifles, and that I was just as well received in rags as I should have been had I been more sumptuously arrayed.

I therefore accompanied his emissaries to a garden house without the town, where the chief had established his quarters. He was in the upper apartments, which were choked up with his subordinate officers, attendants, and soldiery. He saluted me civilly, and said that I must stay with him, to which I replied, no, and that I intended to go on. He then observed, that I must stay two or three days with him, and I again replied, no; on which he said that I must at least spend the day with him; to which I answered I had no objection. The people about wondered how I had

got through Khaibar, and the nawâb remarked for me, that I had nothing to lose. He informed me that he would provide a man to conduct me in safety to Kâbal; to which I did not object, and thanked him. He then inquired if I needed any thing, and I replied negatively. The nawâb directed that I should be taken every care of, and I took my leave of him. I was now conducted to a house, which I was told to consider mine as long as I pleased to occupy it, and to give myself no anxiety about anything, as all my wants would be attended to by the nawâb's orders.

I was soon visited by two singular characters, the one a Molaví from Lahore, the other a Bráhmân from Laknow. They stated, that they had each set out on a tour for some years, and accidentally meeting, had become companions. Chance had brought them into contact with the nâwab, and they were now sojourners with him. They much praised his good qualities. In manners and conversation they were extremely refined and intelligent, and had mirth and spirituality, which I had never before witnessed in a Mâhomedân or Hindú. They seemed independent in circumstances, and their apparel, equipage, &c. all bore the marks of affluence. Both made me offers of clothing, money, &c. and apparently with sincerity. I had indeed some difficulty to decline a horse, which was urged upon me by the Molaví, who could not imagine a person could travel,

without pain, on foot. I accepted their invitation to pass the day with them, and leaving the house, accompanied them to their quarters. I knew not their names, but heard the Bráhman merrily addressed as Múlla Mall. I afterwards learned that they were versed, or reputed to be, in the occult secrets of kímía, or gold making, which at once accounted for their companionship, and for the high favour they were held in by the nawâb, who is one of the most ardent votaries of the mysterious science to be met with in Afghânistân.

Early the next morning we started from Jelálabád, the nawâb having given a very good man to accompany us to Kâbal. He had also provided a horse for me to ride on, and occasionally, or when inclined, I made use of the animal. Leaving the choice of road to our new attendant, we were led the high one, skirting the border of the cultivated plain on our right, and generally winding around the base of a series of conglomerate elevations to the left, which extend for fifteen or twenty miles to the great mountain range Saféd Koh (the white hill), which noble barrier defines the limits of the Jelálabád valley to the south, and divides it from Bangash. The plain of Jelálabád is cultivated to a high degree, and in this part of it, with an average breadth of three or four miles, has a length from Jelálabád to Bálla Bâgh of twelve or thirteen miles. Its entire length being estimated from the hill of Koh

Sang Súrâkh, and carried beyond Bálla Bâgh, would be double this distance, but the portion east of the town is by no means so abundantly cultivated, or so populous as that to the west. This tract is covered with a profusion of castles, villages and gardens, while to the north it is defined by the course of the Kâbal river, flowing beneath sandstone elevations, stretching to the skirts of the high ranges occupying the space between Khonar and Lúghmân. Behind, or north of these ranges, is the region of the Síáposh Kâfrs. Besides the Kâbal river, the plain is copiously irrigated by other streams, and notably by the Súrkh Rúd (the red river), which enters it from the west, and falls into the main river at Darúnta; by the Kara-sú (the black river), which east of Bálla Bâgh unites with the Súrkh Rúd; and by the numerous and beautiful springs of Súltânpúr, which form a rivulet flowing through the centre of the plain by Chahár Bâgh. Few countries can possess more attractive scenery, or can exhibit so many grand features in its surrounding landscape. In every direction the eye wanders on huge mountain ranges.

We passed successively to our right the larger villages of the plain, Chahár Bâgh, distinguished for its royal garden, and for being the abode of a venerated Hindú Gúrú; Súltânpúr, famous for its orchards and springs, and the reputed shrine of Bábá Nának; Shamsípúr and Wattípúr; until

we reached the small enclosed town of Bálla Bâgh, seated on the southern bank of the Súrkh Rúd, and the representative of the ancient Adínapúr, whose slender vestiges are on the opposite bank. This place is more commercial than Jelálabád, has many Hindú traders, and a few bankers resident at it. The site being more elevated, the climate is less sultry. To the west, there is a large royal garden, and the environs to the east are highly cultivated, particularly with sugar-cane. To the south and west, a bleak stony plain extends. We found here six pieces of artillery, belonging to the Nawâb Máhomed Zemân Khân, lying without the town-gate to the south; and halted during the day at a takía, or Máhomedan shrine.

In the evening, complying with the wishes of our guide, we left the high road leading to Nimla and Gandamak, and descended into the valley of the Súrkh Rúd, which flows at the base of a mountain range, the Síá Koh (black hill), separating the Jelálabád country from Lúghmân. This range stretches from Darúnta to Jigdillak, with a length of about twenty-five miles. We proceeded up the valley, passing a few Afghân hamlets and fortlets, and occasionally crossing the minor rivulets, which flow into the Súrkh Rúd, having their rise in the Saféd Koh range. The valley was everywhere cultivated, so far as the scantiness of the soil permitted, but the surface was rocky and unfavourable to the farmer. The



VIEW of BALLABAGH from the NORTH [redacted]ALABAD

houses were alike mean in appearance and structure, and it was evident that their tenants, rude Ghiljís, were not very affluent. On the hills behind Bálla Bâgh, under which are the ruins attributed to Adínapúr, we had noticed a great variety of ruined parapets and walls, also a few caves with triangular entrances. At a spot in this valley, called Kang Karak, where a large rivulet joins the river, and where a road over the plain of Bâmak strikes off to Nimla, there were a more considerable number of caves, and the locality was agreeably picturesque. At length we halted at a hamlet, and passed the night on the roof of one of the houses. We had little to lose, but a robber this night intended to have taken that little. He had crept, in pursuance of his plan, upon the roof, but chancing to awaken my companions, he was compelled to fly.

The next day, still tracing the course of the river, now gliding through hills on either side, we came upon the high road, at a locality called Súrkh Púl (the red bridge), from a dilapidated structure of one arch thrown over the stream, according to a Persian inscription on a rock near it, by Alí Merdân Khân. The river is fordable, I suspect at all seasons, unless when increased by sudden swells. The road led hence to Jigdillak; but, implicitly obedient to our guide, we again struck across the country to the south; and leaving the Ghiljí district of Hissárak on our left, turned

westernly, and ultimately reached Hávízângânî, a spot where we found a dwelling, with a few vines near it, a flour-mill, a tandúr, or baker's oven, an assemblage of Afghân tents, two lines of fine standard mulberry-trees laden with ripe purple fruit, and a spring of delicious water. Beneath the shade of the mulberry-trees were sitting some eight or ten persons. We discovered that they were in some degree strangers as well as ourselves. The greater number of them were the party of a malek of Fattíabâd, a village three or four miles south of Bálla Bâgh, whom business had brought here; and the others, a Sáhibzâda of Loghar, with his attendants. In the last we had a companion for our onward journey; and we soon became familiar with the whole of the party, and sat with them. The mulberry-trees were shaken, and an enormous heap of the fruit was placed before me. I had eaten the mulberries of Kohât, Hângú, and Peshâwer, but had never before seen or tasted fruit comparable to the present. I needed not encouragement to enjoy the treat. In the course of the day the malek observed to me, that he had ten wives, and wished me, from my Feringhí knowledge, to communicate some specific to strengthen him. I asserted my inability to oblige him, and he wished me to look into my book. I said that the book was on very different matter, and did not look into it. He was exceedingly persisting that I should consult the book, and I unwisely did not humour him, it

not occurring to me that he might be merely curious to see what was in it, or whether there was any Persian writing which he might understand.

Since leaving Bálla Bâgh, although the weather was still warm, we had by no means experienced the heats prevailing in the plain of Jelálabád, and in the country to the east. We were quite conscious by our feelings that we were travelling into a purer and cooler atmosphere. At this place, however, the change was extremely sensible, and I was in high spirits at the certainty of having reached the cold country. Neither was I less delighted at the novelties shown in the aspect of the country, and in its vegetable productions. Here I first met with the common but fragrant plant, terk, and cannot express my joy when I inhaled the breeze perfumed with its odour. I was never tired of roving about the low hills in our neighbourhood, and found everything new and pleasing, but I was unusually glad, and a strange presentiment arose in my mind, which I could not banish, that some present evil would befal me. In the evening I was the guest of some one, I knew not of whom, but a stewed fowl was brought to me from the Afghân tents, where the females prepared the repast for the whole party. I ate a portion of it, and was told to tie up the remainder for the morning. I did so, and placed it near my book, and as night came on, went to sleep. In the morning my book was

missing. I was chagrined to lose so simply what the Khaibar robbers had respected, and returned to me. Ineffectual search was made over the neighbourhood, and I was compelled to leave without recovering it. My companions suspected the malek of Fattíabâd might have taken it, but there was the probability that some dog, or other animal, had carried it off with the fowl, which had also disappeared. My regret made me use high language, but I was cautioned to be moderate, as the inhabitants, Ghiljís, were bad people.

We left Hávízângâní, to me a disastrous spot; and our small party was augmented by that of the Loghar Sáhibzâda, a respectable and agreeable person. We made this day the passage of the Kotâl, or pass of Karkacha, the most southernly of the routes leading from Jelálabád to Kâbal; the other is that of Jigdillak; and both lead to Tézí. I cannot call to mind that the Kotâl was anywhere difficult, but I dismounted during the greater portion of it, rather from consideration for my horse than from necessity. The hills are not abrupt, and many of them have a surface of dark red soil. They cover the space between the Jelálabád valley and Amân Koh, the western continuation of Saféd Koh, where the Súrkh Rúd rises; and from the river washing away their particles in its course, it acquires, in certain seasons, a deep red tinge; whence its name. The pass afforded some delightful scenery, and the hills, overspread with pine-fir, and holly-trees, were

peculiarly interesting. We descended into the valley of Tézí, where we halted at a collection of pastoral Afghân tents, the people receiving us as guests, being happy, it appeared, to entertain a Sáhibzáda's party. Tézí was a picturesque valley, with a castle, and much cultivation, on a rivulet, near which we halted. At its southern extremity, in the high hills confining it, were visible the castles and gardens of various Ghiljí chiefs, who own the valley. The rivulet of Tézí flows, with a marked descent, by Séh Bábá, and falls into the Kâbal river near Súrbí. We found at Tézí in the garden attached to the castle, the troops of Sadú Khân, the chief whose expulsion from Hângú I have noted. They were under the orders of a Náib, and *en route* to reinforce the Nawâb Jabár Khân at Jelálabád. I chanced to stroll near them, and narrowly escaped having a scuffle with some of them, who wished to treat me as a Ghiljí rogue; others recognized me, and in lieu of maltreatment I was overwhelmed with goodness. I sat some time with the leader, and was regaled with apricots, sent for from the Tézí Malek's private garden. Readiness was professed to recover my book, and the náib said he would do his best, when in a day or two, he should be at Hávízângâni. We remained the night at Tézi.

The next morning we crossed the succession of passes, called the Haft-kotâl, (seven passes,) the road tolerably good, and reached the table lands,

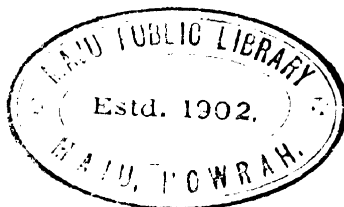
extending to Khúrd Kâbal (Little Kâbal). At their commencement was the grave of Jabár, the progenitor of the great Ghiljí family of that name, and beyond it the remains of a Chághatai fortress. The plain to the south has for boundary a well-marked hill range, under which we see the castle and gardens of Tchakrí, where resides Walí, a Karoh Khél Ghiljí, and notorious freebooter. As we approached Khúrd Kâbal we passed the remains of another Chághatai fortress, constructed of a white argillaceous stone, containing fossil fresh water shells, which abound in the formation of the plains hereabouts. Beyond the fortress a short tanghí, or defile, through which flows a rivulet, conducted into the plain of Khúrd Kâbal, of fair extent, comprising some cultivated lands, a good deal of pasture, and a fine rivulet, which coming from Músáhí passes through defiles to Bhút Khâk, and thence into the river of Kâbal. The village of Khúrd Kâbal was seated on the opposite side of the stream, at some distance, under the hills. Neither did we visit it, although it is a common halting-place. We had heard that the cholera, which had been so destructive at Peshâwer, had travelled on to Kâbal, and was raging with great violence. The Sáhibzâda was afraid to venture to the city, and as the direct way to Loghar leads from Khúrd Kâbal, we now separated. He would have been pleased that I should have accompanied

him, and have remained in Loghar until the pestilence had ceased; but I declined his polite proposal, as I did not purpose to linger at Kâbal, and hoped to pass unharmed the one or two days I might stay in its vicinity. We crossed the hills separating the plain of Khúrd Kâbal from that of the great city, by a by-path, and descended upon Killa Mohsan, where we halted, and had bread prepared. Towards evening we started anew, and crossing the meadows of Bégrám, and the river of Loghar, we reached by sunset the castle of Agá Lâla at Bíni Sár (the nose of the city), about three miles south of the Bálla Hissár of Kâbal. This castle belonged to a family, many of whose members resided at Pesháwer; and I had been directed to repair to it, and to make it my home.

I found that the mother of Agá Lâla was dwelling at it. She sent a message of welcome to me, and informed me that she was going into the city that night, where some one dear to her was indisposed, but would return in the morning, and every attention should be paid to me. The good lady went; and I was told in the morning, she was no more. The cholera had added her to the number of its victims.

The city, I learned, was in charge of Máhomed Akbár Khân, second son of Dost Máhomed Khân, who, with his army, was encamped at Ghazní, awaiting the arrival of his hostile brothers from

Kândahár. I determined to lose no time in proceeding to the Sirdár's camp, being as curious to witness the proceedings of an Afghân army as desirous to escape from the baleful influence of contagion and disease.



CHAPTER XI.

Múlla Najíb's account.—His sources of information.—Difficulty to procure trustworthy information.—Misapplication of information.—Interest as to the Síáposh.—Speculations.—Traditions. — Absence of records. — Hindú sovereignty.—Wars of Ghaznavide princes.—Amír Taimúr's conquests.—His march against the Síáposh.—Attacks them.—Records his victory.—Taimúr's pillar.— Taimúr Hissár.— Síáposh era.— Defeat of Amír Taimúr's detachment.—Crusades against the Síáposh.—Baber's notices —His incursions upon the Síáposh.—His mission to the Síáposh.—Marco Polo's silence.—Account by Benedict Goez.—Chances of obtaining correct information.—Nimchas.—Rivers of Kâfristân.—The Kow.—The Nadjíl.—the Kámeh.—Route from Jelálabád to Chitrâl.—Boundaries of the Síáposh.—View from Koh Karinj.—Coup d'œil.—Cultivation.—Diet.—Cattle.— Vegetable productions. — Gold. — Villages.— Their position.—Nijrow.—Nadjíl.—Chághanserai.— Baber's slaughter at Bájor.—Language of the Síáposh—of their neighbours.—The Perâncheh.—The Pashai.—The Lúghmâní.—The Kohistâni.—The Pashai race.—The Perânchehs.—The Tâjiks of Nijrow.—Hishpí.—The Sáfís.—The Yeghânís.—Treatment of the dead.—Gebers formerly in these countries.—Pyrethræ.—Regulations as to females.—Religion.— Excessive hospitality.— Ceremony at marriages.—Houses.—Indulgence in conviviality.—Peculiar customs.—Shave their heads.—War and peace.—Arms.—Crusades.—Trade. — Karaj. — Shâhríar of Yezd is murdered.—Malek Mannír's account.— Practicability of opening communication with the Síáposh.—Deputation to Amír Máhomed Khân.

THE Honourable Mr. Elphinstone, in the Appendix to his admirable work on Afghânistân, has included

an account, as given by one of his agents, Múlla Najíb, of the singular and secluded people known to their Máhomedan neighbours as the Síáposh Káfrs, or black-clad infidels, and who inhabit the mountainous regions north of Lúghmân and Khonar, and between the courses of the Nadjíl and Kámeh rivers.

It is pretty certain that Múlla Najíb, who is still alive, never ventured into the Síáposh country, as I believe he pretended; still his account is the only tolerable one which has appeared of the customs and usages of the mysterious race. At the period of the Kâbal mission in 1809 it was easy for him to learn all that he has recorded, by actual communication with the numerous individuals of their nation, who were wont to visit the towns and villages of Peshatt and Khonar, under protection of Saiyad Najím, then the ruler of those districts, who preserved an understanding with his Síáposh neighbours.

No subsequent accounts have contributed much additional information, being merely hearsay statements, given and received at random: and a little reflection will teach that trustworthy information is scarcely to be expected from casual sources. The Máhomedâns bordering on the Síáposh frontiers are incompetent to speak accurately of the manners, habits, history, or traditions of tribes with whom they have no friendly intercourse.

They repeat, therefore, the wondrous tales they

have heard from persons as ignorant as themselves, whence their variance with all probability, and with each other. It also happens, that the few Síáposh who are seen in the adjacent countries are such as have been kidnapped, and generally children or shepherd boys, amongst the rudest and less informed of their own countrymen; and consequently unqualified to give testimony on the topics concerning which European curiosity desires to be satisfied. The six or seven Kâfr youths I have seen were obviously in this predicament, and incapable of replying clearly to questions on subjects which they did not comprehend.

For these reasons, we can obtain but vague and defective information as to the Síáposh races from their neighbours; and even this has been in many cases misunderstood by careless inquirers, who have been therefore led to ascribe to the objects of their researches a descent from the Arabs, from the Korésh, or from other equally improbable stocks.

There can be no doubt but that great interest attaches to a people on all sides environed by hostile neighbours of a different faith, but whose valour, assisted by the strength and intricacy of their mountainous abodes, has enabled them, to this day, to maintain independence, and to baffle the attempts of all invaders to subdue them. To us, this interest is considerably augmented by the knowledge that these indomitable tribes have an unusual fairness of complexion, and a regularity of features, which would seem

to identify them with the European family of nations. We are not permitted to account for these physiological distinctions by referring them to the influences of climate or of situation, as such influences do not similarly affect their neighbours, in like manner exposed to them. We cannot behold the fair and regular countenance of the Síáposh, his variously coloured eye, and shaded hair, and suppose for a moment that he is of the same family as the Tâjik, or the Hazára, the Uzbek, or the Kirghiz. In proportion as we find it impossible to affiliate him with any of his neighbours, our anxiety increases to ascertain his origin, and to verify the causes which have enshrouded him with mystery, and isolated him, under the shelter of his inaccessible retreats, from the rest of mankind.

When no one knows, all may conjecture,—but with regard to the Síáposh community, the Asiatic and the European would probably apply very different speculations. The latter might fondly fall back upon the remote period when the son of Philip led his victorious arms into the regions of central Asia, and call to mind the various colonies he planted in them to promote the security and permanent retention of his acquisitions. He might remember the Macedonian colonies of Alexandria ad Caucasem, of Arigæum and Bazira;—the garrisons of Nysa, Ora, Massaga, Peuceleotis and Aornos. He might also recollect, that a number of sovereigns, of Greek descent, subsequently ruled in these countries, until

they were overrun by the Getic hordes of Scythia. He would not fail to discover that the region now inhabited by the Síáposh is surrounded by the very countries in which the Greek sovereignty prevailed, and that it is encircled by the colonies, posts, and garrisons, known to have been established in them;—while it is naturally that into which the expatriated princes and their subjects would have been driven, or into which they would have retired to escape the fury of their fierce and barbarous invaders. He might farther be pleased to find, that the conclusions which such recollections would tend to suggest were sanctioned by the recorded traditions existing in these quarters, and that they are strengthened by the fact, that many petty princes and chiefs, some of whom, now Máhomedans, but originally Síáposh, claim descent from the Macedonian hero; and have preserved vague accounts referrible either to their reputed ancestor's marriage with the fair Roxana, or to his amour with the captive queen of Massaga.

But while, if we were enabled positively to pronounce the Síáposh tribe to be descendants of the Greek colonists and subjects, we might plausibly account for their location, and rationally enough for their physical and physiological distinctions and peculiarities, it is scarcely allowable, on our scanty knowledge of them, to draw so bold and welcome an inference.

From the period of Getic ascendancy to that of

the appearance of Máhomedan armies in the countries bordering on the Indus, we have no extant records to apply to for any information on the history of the times. The discovery of a multitude of coins, which may be classed into many well defined and distinct series, and which were undeniably current in these countries, yield abundant testimony that not only did they undergo a number of political convulsions, and experience considerable alternations in the authority of various dynasties, but that divers religions were introduced, and patronized by the monarchs of the day. Such testimony is, moreover, confirmed by slight notices, acquired through foreign and indirect channels.

In the absence of positive historical evidence we need not expect to derive any intimation applicable to the Síáposh tribes, but we may reasonably suppose that, if then located in their present seats, their manners, usages, habits, religious belief, and opinions, may have been more or less changed and modified by their intercourse with the several races of people, who, of various origin and creed, dominated in the countries adjacent to them: for it is possible that, until the intolerant and persecuting Máhomedân established his sway, they were in communication with the inhabitants of the plains; as they would not have had the same reasons for jealous distrust and hostility.

We know little of the government of these countries under the viceroys of the Caliphs, or how long

they continued to exercise it, yet it must have been for a considerable period, if we accept as evidence the large number of their coins found. It is still certain that the Hindú princes, east of the Indus, recovered the regions west of the river by the expulsion of the early Máhomedan governors, as we find them in possession, when Sabakhtaghin, of the Ghaznavide line of princes, found himself strong enough to undertake their conquest, and to carry his arms to the Indus. His son, the celebrated Máhmúd, distinguished himself in these campaigns, and, if we credit tradition, Jelálabád, or the province of Ningrahár, was the scene of severe contest, while the district of Lúghmân, in particular, immediately to the south of the Síáposh region, became the theatre of a most sanguinary and obstinate warfare between the Músulmân armies and the infidels.

From this epoch we have, I believe, tolerably authentic accounts preserved by Máhomedan historians. Their works relating to the exploits of Sabakhtaghin and his son, merit examination for the purpose of eliciting who these infidels were, who so bravely defended their country, and whether they had any connexion with the Síáposh. It will strike any one, that if previously there had been no enmity between the natives of the hills and the inhabitants of the plains, there was now ample occasion to have given rise to it. May it be, that from this date exists that hostility which has endured unabated for so many centuries?

Sabakhtaghin died 997, A. D. It was somewhat before that time, therefore, that these events took place. Yet it is not until more than four centuries afterwards that we find the Síáposh mentioned by name, and as occupying the country they now hold. The conquests of Amír Taimúr brought these people to his notice, and he made an expedition against them, which is rather circumstantially detailed by his historian, Sherífadín, and contains a few particulars worthy of note.

In 1399, A. D. that conqueror being at Anderáb, the inhabitants complained to him that they were grievously oppressed by the idolaters of Ketuer, and by the Síáposh. It would appear, that the general name of the northern parts of the region of Kâfristân was Ketuer, or Katáwar. The princes of Chitrâl, who in the time of Taimúr were no doubt infidels, and who are among those claiming descent from Alexander, being still stiled Shâh Katáwar, or the kings of Katáwar. Chitrâl is also called, in the countries to the south, Kâshghár-í-khúrd, or the little Kâshghár. It was asserted by the complainants that the Síáposh extorted excessive sums of money from them, calling it tribute and karaj, (a term in use at this day,) and in default of payment, killed their men and carried off their women and children. Taimúr selecting nearly a third part of his army, (or three out of every ten soldiers,) marched against the Síáposh. He reached Perjân, said to be a town of Bádakshân, two days from Anderáb,

whence he detached a large force to the left, or north, while he proceeded himself to Kavuk, where finding a demolished fortress, he ordered it to be rebuilt. Neither of these localities are perhaps exactly known, but it may be inferred that Kavuk was in the valley of Panjshír. From Kavuk, Taimúr made the ascent of the mountains of Ketuer. These were the range dividing the courses of the Panjshír and Nadjíl rivers; and this notice substantiates the fact that the country to the east of Panjshír was called Katáwar, and that the term was a general one applied to that part of Káfristân. The passage was difficult, from snow, but when the army had surmounted it, they descended upon a river, (that of Nadjíl,) where was a fortress on the western bank. This was abandoned by the Síáposh, who crossed the river, and occupied the summit of a high hill.

The infidels are described as "strong men, and as large as the giants of Aad. They go all naked; their kings are named Oda and Odashooh. They have a particular language, which is neither Persian, nor Turkish, nor Indian, and know no other than this." Taimúr passed the river, and attacked the Síáposh position, which, defended with singular obstinacy, was at length carried. The males of the infidels, whose souls are said to have been more black than their garments, were put to the sword, their women and children were carried away.

"Taimúr ordered the history of this action to be

engraved upon marble. It happened in the month Ramadan, in the year of the Hejra 800, (June 1398,) and he added the particular epocha which this people used, that their posterity might have some knowledge of the famous pillar of the ever victorious Taimúr. This pillar, so inscribed, gave the greater pleasure to the emperor, in that these people had never been conquered by any prince in the world, not even by Alexander the Great."

This quotation comprises interesting details. First, the erection of the marble pillar. Secondly, the recorded fact that the Síáposh had a peculiar epocha. And thirdly, the allusion to their valour and long independence, and to Alexander.

As regards the pillar, it would be satisfactory to ascertain whether it be still in existence. I may note, that the extracts from Sherífadín are taken from the English version of the French translation by Petit La Croix. The French author, it is to be feared, has in some instances taken liberty with his original, and the English author may have treated the French one with as little ceremony. Whether a pillar was erected or not,—a work requiring some time and labour,—there is little reason to doubt but that some inscription recorded the triumph of Taimúr. To the north of Nadjíl, a district dependent on Lúghmân, and through which the river named after it flows, and which river we suppose to be the one to which Taimúr had arrived, is a structure, or some other monument,

known by the name of Taimúr Hissár. In the ordinary acceptation of the term Hissár in these countries, it would imply a superior fortress, but as the place is, in the Síáposh country, it is not visited by people from without, and all that can be ascertained is, that there exists some token of the conqueror's visit, bearing his name, and which is admitted, by tradition, to relate to him. It might not be inconsistent with probability to believe, that by Taimur Hissár may be known the remains of the fortress on the river, abandoned by the Síáposh, and dismantled by Taimúr. Near it would be, of course, the inscription which it would be so desirable to recover. The malek, or petty chief of Nadjíl, also claims descent from Amír Taimúr, to whom is ascribed an amour, precisely of the same nature as the one attributed to Alexander.

The fact that the Síáposh had, at that period, a particular era, is also important, because it may be hoped that they have preserved it, and that people who have certain ideas on chronology, may not be altogether without them on other subjects.

The allusion to the long independence of the Síáposh proves that their establishment in their mountain seats was not considered of recent date, and the notice of Alexander shows that the emperor and his historian were acquainted with his progress in these countries; and it is certain, that although the romances of the poets have superseded, with the vulgar, the rational history of the

Macedonian conqueror, still there are persons more correctly informed.

The large detachment sent by Taimúr to the left, met with signal disgrace and discomfiture. It is pretended that a reinforcement partly retrieved it, but it is clear that the success of the emperor himself was rather equivocal; and, without attempting to maintain a position in the country of the warlike infidels, he hastily returned to Anderáb, and rejoined the rest of his army.

From this time it appears to have been the practice of the Máhomedan princes of Túrkistân occasionally to make inroads upon the Síáposh, not so much with the view of reducing them as of gaining for themselves a reputation, and of meriting the illustrious title of Ghází, or champion of the faith. History notes many such crusades as that of Súltân Máhomed Mirza of Bokhára, in 1453, A. D. who won the honourable title, whatever may have been the fortune of his arms. It has, however, occurred, that combinations of Máhomedan princes have been made against the independence of the Síáposh, and that armies from different quarters have entered their country. But these have been invariably repulsed, unable to overcome its natural obstacles, and the gallantry of the mountaineers who defended it.

The celebrated Baber, in his Memoirs, repeatedly mentions the Síáposh under the designation of Kâfrs, yet, as his notices are incidental, they im-

part no light upon their history, religion, or other important points, connected with them;—still they are extremely interesting, both as concerns them on minor details, and the neighbouring countries and people to the south; the activity of the observant prince having led him to make frequent excursions amongst the latter. In the sequel we shall have occasion to refer to many of his intimations. In this place, it may suffice to note, that the lapse of a century and a quarter had brought about no change in the nature of the relations between the Síáposh and the people of Panjhír and Anderáb, whose ancestors had claimed Amir Taimúr's protection. Baber, describing Panjhír, notes, that "It lies upon the road, and is in the immediate vicinity of Kâfristân. The thoroughfare and inroads of the robbers of Kâfristân are through Panjhír. In consequence of their vicinity to the Kâfrs, the inhabitants of this district are happy to pay them a fixed contribution. Since I last invaded Hindustân and subdued it (in 1527), the Kâfrs have descended into Panjhír, and returned, after slaying a great number of people, and committing extensive damages."

Baber had previously noted, that in 1514 A. D., the year in which he took Cheghánserai on the Kámeh river, "The Kafrs of Pich came to their assistance;" and adds: "so prevalent is the use of wine among them that every Kâfr has a khig, or leathern bottle of wine about his neck. They

drink wine instead of water." At an earlier period, in 1507, A. D. he had led a plundering expedition against their rice-fields in the valley of Birain, which he thus describes:— "Some persons who were thoroughly acquainted with every part of the country, informed us, that up the river of the Tumân of Alishend, the Kâfrs sow great quantities of rice, and that probably the troops might there be able to lay in their winter's corn. Leaving the dale of Nangenhar, therefore, and pushing speedily forwards, we passed Saigal, and advanced up to the valley of Birain. The troops seized a great quantity of rice. The rice-fields were at the bottom of the hills. The inhabitants in general fled and, escaped, but a few Kâfrs were killed. They had posted some men in a breastwork on a commanding eminence in the valley of Birain. When the Kâfrs fled this party descended rapidly from the hill, and began to annoy us with arrows. We stayed one night in the Kâfrs' rice-fields, where we took a great quantity of grain, and then returned to the camp." Here is the cool narration of a cool exploit; yet Baber nowhere speaks of the Kâfrs with particular ill-feeling, or discovers the slightest ambition to win, at their expense, the title of Ghází, of which Amír Taimúr had been so proud. Their jovial habits, so much in keeping with his own, may have somewhat prepossessed him in their favour. In 1520, A. D. he mentions having sent from Bédrav, (in the pre-

sent Taghow,) one Haidar Alemdar to the Kâfrs. This man on his return met him below the pass of Bâdij, (the present Bâd Pash,) and was "accompanied by some of their chiefs, who brought with them a few skins of wine." The present probably explains the nature of the mission.

It is singular that Marco Polo, who, if the statement transmitted to us in the twenty-fifth chapter of his First Book, as given by Marsden, be implicitly credited, resided for a year in Balashan, or Bádakshân, should not have particularly noticed so interesting a people as the Síáposh. His account of the inhabitants of Bascia in the following chapter, is scarcely applicable to them, as he instances, that they are of a dark complexion, which, assuredly, the Síáposh are not.

In 1603, A.D. Benedict Goez, a Jesuit, crossed the Hindú Kosh by the pass of Perwân, to Anderáb. He heard of the Síáposh tribes; and being told they were not Máhomedans, and that they drank wine, and arrayed themselves in black, inferred that they were Christians. The fanciful notions of the zealous missionary are not more ludicrous than those of later Europeans, who have imagined them to be Arabs.

The reports of Goez must have excited considerable interest and curiosity respecting these tribes throughout Europe; but nothing was done to increase our knowledge of them until the mission of the Honourable Mr. Elphinstone in 1809, when

the report of Múlla Najíb gave as much information respecting their manners and usages as a native could be expected to acquire. It also furnished a vocabulary of their language, I doubt not as perfect as could be composed by a native, recollecting that he heard with the ear of a native of Peshâwer, and that his orthography may be questionable, because peculiar.

Attaching every value to the report of Múlla Najíb, it must be still conceded that we have no information of the Síáposh race, which does not require confirmation; neither are we likely to obtain a sufficient acquaintance with this interesting people, until some intelligent and adventurous European shall penetrate into their sequestered valleys; and by the results of his own observation, and of direct intercourse with the best informed of themselves, enable us to form accurate notions of their present and past state of society, of their religion, language, and other matters relating to them. Until we have such testimony, we must be satisfied with the dubious accounts of natives; but we, as Europeans, can never from them acquire the knowledge we wish to possess of the Síáposh.

The boundaries of the country they occupy are well known, and their limits have been considerably contracted since the period when they were first brought to notice; both by the encroachments of Máhomedan tribes, and by the defalcation of their

own people at exposed and accessible frontier villages; who, to preserve themselves and their possessions, have professed themselves to be converts to Islám. Such people preserve their original customs and manners in a great degree; and their religion is so equivocal that they are termed Nimcha, or half Mússulmâns. They communicate with Máhomedans and Síáposh, and are, therefore, in some degree useful; but their sympathies are supposed to side with the friends from whom they have unwillingly, and but nominally, seceded.

Three large rivers flow through Kâfristân from north to south, and augment with their waters the river of Kâbal and Jelálabád, which ultimately falls into the Indus. The two westernly ones unite at Tírgarí of Lúghmân; and the joint stream, after a short course of eight or ten miles, falls into the Kâbal river at Kergah, in the same district, about a mile to the east of Mandaráwar. The easternly river, known as that of Kámeh, falls into the Kâbal river east of Jelálabád, and at a distance of about twenty-five miles from Kergah. The Kámeh flows through Chitrâl, and its source is more remote. On the east, it may be considered the boundary of the Síáposh territory, as the river of Nadjíl and Alíshang forms the boundary on the west. The sources of the Nadjíl river are said to be not very distant, and it is the smallest of the three rivers. The central river, which joins that of Nadjíl, is more considerable, and is said to have

a far longer course. It is the only one which has a peculiar name, or one independent of the localities through which it passes, and is called Kow, pronounced exactly as the English word cow. It must not be mistaken for the Cow-mull of Rennell, which is the Gomal, a river rising near the pass of Péhwâr, at the head of Bangash, and with a course from west to east, flowing through the Súlímâní range, west of the Indus, into which it falls a few miles south of Déra Ismael Khân. The river of Nadjíl we have supposed to be that at which Amír Taimúr arrived; and this need scarcely be doubted, as Baber, in noting that there are three passes over the Hindú Kosh from Panjhír, calls the uppermost, or the one farthest to the east, by the name of Khewák, clearly the Kavuk of Sherífadín. This river is, therefore, so far known to history. Of the river Kow nothing is known, beyond the fact of its junction with the former at Tírgarí, having traversed the eastern part of the valley of Lúghmân, named Alingár.

With the river of Kámeh we are better acquainted, there being a route along its course, by which kâfilas sometimes, but not often, pass from the valley of Jelálabád to Chitrâl. The route leads through Bísút, and by Shéghí, Bazárak, Kallatak, Shéwah, and Killah Pádshâh, to Islámpúr, at the head of the vâlley of Búdiáli, leading to Bar-kot, Daminj, and the Dára Núr. From Islámpúr, where the valley of Khonar also commences, constantly

tracing the river bank, the road passes Kandí and Nurgal to Pattán, where the stream is crossed, and then tracing the opposite bank, conducts, by Khonar and Kulígrám, to Peshatt; thence to Dunáhí, lately taken from the Peshatt chief by Mír Alam Khân of Bájor, who keeps a garrison there, as it is at the foot of the pass of Shammatak, by which the great mountain range, stretching from Khonar to Chitrâl, is crossed to Bájor. From Dunáhí the road leads to Sirkaní, and Hindú Ráj—dependent on the Bájor chief; beyond them are Shígal and Asmár, inhabited by Shínwârís; and again beyond them, are Siáposh villages, which passed, the valley of Chitrâl is entered. Above Asmár is a large cataract, and the river above Peshatt is, in some places, narrow enough to be bridged;—from Peshatt jâlas, or floats of inflated skins, pass freely down it. From Pattan, where it is usual to cross the river, as is done for convenience, and a regard to safety, there is still a road along the western bank, which passes many villages, as Niází, Shâhkhútí, Kúlmâní, Kotgáhí opposite to Peshatt, Noreng Páyán opposite to Dúnáhí, Noreng Bálla opposite to Sirkanní, and Téshar opposite to Hindú Ráj. There are also many small rivers or rivulets, which fall into the Kámeh, from the west, in this part of its course. They generally flow down valleys, inhabited by Máhomedans or Nimchas, who are immediate neighbours of the Síáposh, and with whom, as the case may be, they are in hostility, or on amicable terms. Of these the daras, or valleys,

of Mazár, Péch, Shínághâm, and Chághanserái, are the most remarkable. The Síáposh, in this route, between the Shínwârís and Chitrâl, exact karaj, or a tax, from kâfilas, but do not otherwise molest them, although the traders are glad to get through them. Owing to this distrust, or that the road is penible, as it is said to be, and probably that the Shínwârís, a lawless tribe, are more to be dreaded than the Kâfrs, this route is not much used, and kâfilas generally prefer crossing the hills at Dúnáhí to Bájor, whence they proceed northernly to Dír, beyond which they have to recross the same range, descending into the valley of Chitrâl.

To the north, the limits of the Síáposh are defined by the line of road leading from Chitrâl to Faizabád, of Bádakshân. This appears to extend from east to west, and crosses a high mountain range, probably the true Hindú Kosh, the third or fourth march from Chitrâl. From the valley of Panjshír they are separated by a lofty range, the principal peak of which is called Koh Kohwand, and on the south, it has been gleaned, that they border on the districts of Nijrow, Taghow, Nadjíl, Lúghmân, and Shéwah. From Lúghmân they are separated by a high mountain, Koh Karinj, and from Shéwah by that of Núrgal.

From the summit of Koh Karinj a most extensive and commanding view is obtained of the region inhabited by the Síáposh. The eye wanders over an immense space of low rounded hills, with few

prominent ranges, or any particular mountains of great elevation.

The impression derived from the *coup d'œil* coincides with the understood nature of the tract. It being represented as hilly, and traversed by innumerable narrow and rugged valleys and defiles, the roads chiefly leading along the banks of precipices, and frightful chasms, while it is amply supplied with rivers, rivulets, and torrents, but the abundance of water is unfortunately unaccompanied by any extent of cultivable soil. The table spaces, which seem to prevail, may be presumed alike unavailable to agriculture, whether from the rocky character of the surface, or from the absence of moisture. It is allowed that no practicable spot is neglected, and that júárí mekháhí, or Indian maize, is the grain usually cultivated, and frequently on terraces artificially constructed.

The unfitness of the country for the purposes of tillage is so evident that the principal attention of the inhabitants is directed to their orchards, which yield them amazing quantities of fruits; found also, in the wild state, in the greatest profusion over their hills. It is known that they have vines and walnut-trees, and it may be presumed peach, almond, and pistachio-trees, which abound in the hills of their neighbours. They do not, however, procure grain from the adjacent tracts, which is accounted for by the fact that their diet consists principally of meat, cheese, curds and fruits,

both fresh and dried. The quantity of cheese made and consumed by them is said to be surprising. The natives of the Kohistân of Kâbal, and of the dependent valleys of Sir Auleng, Panjshír, Nijrow, &c., subsist much in the same way, and although they can obtain more easily grain, they have a remarkable predilection for cheese and dried fruits. Kâbal is supplied with cheese from those parts, and the people of Nijrow are very expert in its manufacture. Dried túts, or mulberries, which are no doubt abundant with the Síáposh, are a favourite food of the Kohistânís, and much used by them in lieu of bread. They devour them by handfuls, washing them down with water, and travel with bags of them, as regularly as the Síáposh do with khigs of wine.

Horned cattle are said to be scarce among the Síáposh, as are sheep, but they have numerous flocks of goats. These, besides supplying them with food, furnish them with clothing; and from the circumstance of wearing the prepared skins with the hair outside, they have gained the name of Síáposh, or black-clad.

Little is known of the vegetable productions of the country. The river Kow, when swollen by the melting of snows or by rains, brings down to Lúghmân branches of an odoriferous wood, supposed to be sandal, but which is, likely, the juniper cedar. The Síáposh hills are popularly thought the locale of the meher ghíya, or plant of affection, the pos-

session of which is said to secure the love of any one to its fortunate owner. As so valuable a plant would be in high request, it is ingeniously assigned to an inaccessible region.

It is also universally believed that gold is found in large quantities in this country, and it is fancied that it grows with the grain. The metal is pale coloured, and called Tilla Kâhí, or straw-coloured gold, of the same quality as, I believe, Chinese gold generally is. The rivers flowing through Kâfristân undoubtedly bring down gold with them. There are constantly numbers of gold-washers employed near Peshatt on the river of Chitrâl and Kámeh. The metal is also found in the rivers of Lúghmân, and in the river of Kâbal, into which they fall, and is sometimes collected near Kergah and Chahár Bâgh of Lúghmân, and again near Jelálabád. On the joint river of the Kohistân of Kâbal, before it enters the Sáfí hills, there is a spot preserving the name of Zir Shúí, though now unfrequented, and it is certain that all, or nearly all the rivers flowing from the north have auriferous sands, as quantities of the metal are procured in the Yúsaf Zai districts. It may be worthy of note, that the people who search for the gold are not of the countries, but of the Panjâb; many are natives of Jélam, on the river of that name. It is not improbable that the rivers of Kâfristân, when increased in volume, may pass over soils enriched with gold and carry down the precious particles with them. At such times they

necessarily flood the narrow valleys through which they pass, and the little patches or plots in them, sown with maize or other grain. On their subsidence, it is possible, that grains of the metal may be found adhering to the roots of the plants, which have arrested their progress; whence the fiction of the growth of gold with the grain of the country.

As regards the division of the Síáposh into tribes no one knows, or pretends to know any thing about them. Nearly as little can be ascertained of their towns and villages. On the Khonar frontier, where they have more intercourse with their neighbours than on any other, the nearest of their villages are, Kattár, Gambír, and Déh Uz, said to be near to each other, and on the crest of a table-land. There are also in that quarter Arans, Tshúmía, Amísúz, Pandít, and Waigal; and all of these are said to be on the ridges of table-lands, at the extremities of valleys. The three first villages are said to have one thousand houses each, and maleks, or principals, with the names of Udúr, Erakân, Kerim Bâtúr, and Kodâla. The two last belonging to Déh Uz. Arans is said to have three thousaad houses, Tshúmía, Amísúz, and Pandít, one thousand houses each, while Waigal is supposed to have six thousand houses, and to be the largest town in these parts. It may be reasonably suspected that these calculations are above the truth; still, when it is known that there are large and populous villages in a country, it is difficult to reconcile the fact with

so complete a state of barbarism as is imputed to the Síáposh, or to avoid the impression that, men assembled in such communities must have a certain kind of order prevalent amongst them, and be subject to some of the influences inseparable to society. It may be remarked, that they appear to have condensed themselves at the heads of the valleys which they have lost, and by taking up a position on the edges of their table-lands, strive to oppose the farther progress of the Máhomedan. Saiyad Najím of Khonar strove to force this barrier, but ineffectually. In the time of Baber they still held the valleys, as he notices that of Pích (now called Péch, or the tortuous). The natives of Péch now call themselves Sáfís, and are independent, but avow themselves to be Máhomedans. It is strange that their neighbours of Dara Núr, and the remoter inhabitants of Taghow, who are expressly stated by Baber to have been, in his time, Kâfrs, alike call themselves Sáfís, which may be a Síáposh appellation; and there is a village called Sâví, still belonging to them, at the head of Dara Níází, leading from Lúghmân. Baber unfortunately gives few items of intelligence respecting Kâfristân. Describing the boundaries of Kâbal, he says, "In the hill country to the north-east lies Kâfristân, such as Kattor and Gebrek." Kattor may be either the Ketuer of Amír Taimúr, or Kattár, which we have noted as one of the villages west of the valley of Khonar. In the latter case, Gebrek might be Gambír.

easily transformed to Gaber-ak; if otherwise, the name is singular. In describing Nijrow he states, that "Behind it, in the hill country, all the inhabitants are Kâfrs, and the country is Kâfristân." The inhabitants of Nijrow would seem to have been in the transition state, for Baber, after noting that they boil their wine in making it, and fatten cows in the winter season, goes on to say, that they "are wine-bibbers, never pray, fear neither God nor man, and are heathenish in their usages." A good Máhomedan would now make exactly the same remarks of the Sáfís of Dara Núr, who have continued for above three centuries in the same state, as Baber notes, that during his time only they discontinued the practice of eating hogs.

In speaking of Alísheng, he informs us, that the part of Kâfristân nearest to it "is called Meil," and "that the river of Alísheng comes down from Meil." It has been already seen that he has mentioned a foray from Alísheng upon the valley of Birain. Neither it nor Meil can be exactly identified, but Nadjíl is about twelve miles north of Alísheng, and I believe there is no place of the least note between them. Again, in speaking of Alingár, the eastern Tumân of Lúghmán, he notes, that "The part of Kâfristân that is nearest to Alingar is Gewár, and the river of Alingár comes down from Gewár." I can offer no illustration of Gewár. No boundaries to the Dara Núr are mentioned, but we are told that "Kúner and Núrgil

form another Tumân. It is situated in the midst of Kâfristân, which forms its boundary." Báber correctly states, that "Núrgil lies on the west, and Kúner on the east of the river;" and a little farther on that "the lower part of this Tumân is called Milteh-Kendí, below which the country belongs to the Dereh Núr, and Ater." His succeeding description of Chághanserâí is entirely applicable to the place at this day. "Another Balúk is Chághanserai, which contains one village only, and is of limited extent, lying in the very jaws or entrance of Kâfristân. As its inhabitants, although Mússulmâns, are mingled with the Kâfrs, they live according to the customs of that race." Three centuries have in this instance produced no difference in the relative condition of this place; it is now, as formerly, the boundary between the Mússulmân and Kâfr, and its inhabitants, under the rule of Bájor, are compelled to live on a good footing with their formidable infidel neighbours. They call themselves Tájiks, and trace their origin to the Kaiân heroes. In the year 1519, A. D. Baber took by assault the citadel and town of Bajor, and massacred the ruling chief, or súltân, with the greater part of his family, and about three thousand of his ill-fated subjects. This wanton sacrifice of human life, in conformity with the barbarous spirit of the age, and intended as a severe military example, seemed to require extenuation; and in showing the reasons which actuated him, Baber plainly intimates that the de-

voted people were what would now be called Nimcha Máhomedans. He says: "As the men of Bájour were rebels to the followers of Islám, and as, beside their rebellion and hostility, they followed the customs and usages of the infidels, while even the name of Islám was extirpated from among them, they were all put to the sword, and their wives and families made prisoners. Perhaps upwards of three thousand were killed." This slaughter occurred on the 7th January, and on the 12th January, Baber records that, "The Kâfrs in the neighbourhood of Bájour, had brought down wine in a number of skins. The wines and fruits of Bájour are wholly from that part of Kâfristân which lies about Bájour." This notice, exemplifying the familiar intercourse of the Síáposh with the invader's camp, points out likewise that the country north of Bájor, and east of the great mountain range of Chitrâl and Khonar, was then possessed by them; that the Shínwâris had not then intruded themselves, and that the natives of Dír were not then converted. There is nothing more evident from all Baber's details than the fact, that the countries of Kâbal, Nangenhár, Lúghmân, &c. were in his days infinitely less populous than they are at present; and we find him constrained to remedy the loss he had inflicted upon the population of Bájor by the location in it of the people of Bísút. On the 30th January he dispatched "Yusef Ali Bekawel to collect them, and remove them to Bájour;" and he

prefaces this announcement by informing us that "the people of Bísút are connected with those of Bajour;" in itself a fact of some consequence.

As regards the language, or dialect spoken by the Síáposh, there can be no doubt but that they have one, which, as Sherífadín has recorded, is neither exactly Persian, nor Turkí, nor Hindí. It is remarkable that on the south western, and southern borders of the Síáposh country, or in those points where it connects with the actual limits of the Kâbal and Jelálabád territories, there are four distinct dialects spoken, independently of the more prevailing ones of Persian, Afghâní, Túrkí, and Hindí. The dialects in question are called Perâncheh, Pashai, Lúghmâní, and Kohistâní. The Perâncheh is spoken by a few families of the same name, resident in or near Panjshír; the Pashai, by a few families, also of the same designation, occupying some half dozen villages in the hills east of Nijrow; by the inhabitants of Nijrow generally; and by those of Panjshír. The two latter people are, however, acquainted with Persian, which the few Pashai families are not. The Lúghmâní is spoken by the Tàjik inhabitants of Lúghmân, who also speak Persian. The Kohistâní is spoken by the Sáfí inhabitants of Dara Núr, Dara Mazár, Dara Péch, &c.; who know no other dialect. It is said, and with every appearance of probability, that these several people are able to hold converse with the Síáposh. On a comparison of their dialects, although they by no means coincide,

there is sufficient similarity to authorize the assumption of their affinity, and the conjecture that they are the remains of some old language, once general in this country, before the introduction of Persian, Arabic, and Túrkí, and that they have a close resemblance to that spoken by the Síáposh. Of these four dialects, the Kohistâní most nearly approaches to Hindí; and, on listening to people conversing therein, I was able, without comprehending the whole of what was said, to understand the general purport of their discourse.

There are also other dialects spoken by various people in the valleys of Kâbal and Jelálabád, descended from the same original stock; and the natives of Dír and Chitrâl have alike dialects unintelligible to their neighbours, but which it may be presumed are understood by the Síáposh. Máhomedans conversant in Arabic have recognized in the dialect of Chitrâl many Arabic terms, and they, as well as Persian terms, are to be found in the other dialects I have mentioned; which is no subject of wonder, considering that for a long period the Caliphs dominated in these countries, and that the Arabic language and literature must have been very generally introduced. The language of the Síáposh will be more or less blended with Arabic terms, as their settlement in their present abodes may have happened before or after the first Máhomedân invaders; and this test may be advantageously applied both to determine that period

and the antiquity of the several dialects; of which the one most free from foreign terms may reasonably be concluded to be the most ancient, and that most resembling the original language. It will be observed, that the names Lúghmâní and Kohistâní merely refer to the localities in which certain dialects are spoken; and I notice this to suggest, that of these several dialects spoken on the Síáposh borders the Pashai may be the more original. We are enabled to trace a people of this name, although now obscure and nearly forgotten, throughout the whole country from Panjshír to Chitrâl. In Nijrow are still a few Pashai families; in Lúghmân, a village at the foot of Koh Karinj, preserves the appellation of Pashai; in Khonar, the actual town of Peshatt, retains a nominal memento of the Pashai race, as in Bájor does the village of Pash-grám. The inhabitants of Panjshír and Nijrow, speaking the Pashai dialect, although now calling themselves Tâjiks, may not unreasonably be supposed to be of Pashai descent; and the same remark may apply to the Sáfís of Taghow, the Dara Núr, &c. and to the inhabitants of Lúghmân. The testimony of Baber is positive that these several people, as well as those of Bájor, &c. were in his time either Kâfrs, as he styles the Síáposh, or Nimcha Máhomedâns in a state of transition, which some of them continue to be to this day.

The Perânchehs, besides the few families at Panjshír who preserve their ancient dialect, are

found over a large tract of country, and it is well known that their conversion to Islám is of comparatively recent date. At the city of Kâbal some of the more eminent merchants are Perânchehs. They occupy a considerable village in Kámeh; they also inhabit Makkad on the Indus, and again are found at Atak, and the towns between it and the Jélam river. In all situations they are a commercial people.

The natives of Nijrow, who have assumed the name of Tâjik, have become better Máhomedans than they were in the time of Baber, and their valour, and difficult country, have been sufficient generally to preserve their independence. They are numerous and well armed, having all muskets. The Pashai families in the vicinity of Nijrow are a distinct community, but on a good understanding with their neighbours. Their largest village is Hishpí, and they are represented as extremely hospitable. Their females wear rú-bands, or veils of horse-hair, covering merely their faces. Belonging to Hishpí are numerous orchards, well stocked with walnut, mulberry, pomegranate trees, and vines. Their mountains are covered with the jelgozeh pine, and the balút, or holly trees.

The Sáfís, or people so called, are widely spread. It has been noted that they inhabit Taghow. They now speak the Afghân dialect, but I am not certain that they do not also speak Pashai. Baber distinctly notes that the people of Taghow were in

his time Kâfrs. Under their present name, they became known to Nádir, who cultivated a friendship with them. They then inhabited a larger tract of country, and were in hostility with the Ghiljís, who had previously expelled them from the lands to the south of Taghow, and between Kâbal and Jelálabád. On this account Nádir regarded them favourably. The inhabitants of Dara Núr, Dara Mazár, Dara Péch, and of all the valleys opening upon the Khonar river, who, originally Kâfrs, have, for security or convenience, professed themselves Máhomedans, are in like manner called Sáfís: these speak a dialect called Kohistâní, and no other. Their situation enables them to maintain independence, and prevents much intercourse with them; whence they preserve nearly all their ancient manners and usages. In the hills, south of Bájor, in a district called Súrkh Kambar, we again find Sáfís, who are most likely converted infidels; and south of them, at Báhí, are a people called Yeghâní, who consider themselves Afghâns, but speak a peculiar dialect, which no Afghân can comprehend. At Báhí are many caves and ancient vestiges. It is the first march from Goshter, on the Jelálabád river, towards Bájor. I have intimated that Sáfí may be a Síáposh appellation; it however occurs to me—seeing it borne by people in all instances seceders from the Síáposh community—that it may have been conferred upon them in consequence of that secession, for Sáf signifies pure; and in sepa-

rating themselves from the impure idolaters, they would have merited from Máhomedans the distinguishing name of Sáfí, or the pure people.

It is agreed that the Síáposh place their corpses in deal boxes, and, without interring them, expose them on the summits of hills; but it is not explained whether this is a final disposition. There can be no doubt but that the usages of a people with regard to their dead are important evidences of the faith professed by them; or, if not clearly indicating it, that they may show what faith is not professed. Thus, we are not permitted to consider a race that does not burn its dead of Hindú faith; and the rule of semi-exposure, adopted by the Síáposh, has contributed, probably, to their being suspected to be a remnant of the Gebers, or followers of the reformer Zerdesht. I had, at one time, this opinion, but could not conscientiously adhere to it; for, in no account did I ever hear the least mention of fire-worship amongst them. There is the certainty, that within the three last centuries there were people called Gebers in the Kâbal countries, particularly in Lúghmân and Bájor; also, that in the days of Baber there was a dialect called Geberí. We are also told that one of the divisions of Kâfristân was named Gebrek. But it does not follow that the people called Gebers then professed the worship of fire; they may have merely preserved the name given to their ancestors, who did so. The dialect

called Geberí is at present unknown, nor can it be decisively assigned to any one of the various dialects still spoken, although possibly due to one of them. Baber enumerates, "Arabic, Persian, Túrkí, Mogolí, Hindí, Afghâní, Pashai, Paráchí, Geberí, Berekí, and Lamghâní." This list would still stand good, substituting for Geberí, Kohistâní; while it might be augmented by adding the various dialects spoken in the hill-countries encircling Bájor. Of ancient dialects or languages, known by name to the well-informed natives of Central Asia, are, it may be noted, Húnání (Greek), Híbráíní (Hebrew), Súríání (Syriac), and Páhlaví (Pálí). That in former time fire-worship existed to a certain, if limited extent in Afghânistân, is evidenced by the pyrethræ, or altars, still crowning the crests of hills at Gard-déz, at Bámíân at Séghân, and at other places. Near Bámíâń is also a cavern, containing enormous quantities of human bones, apparently a common receptacle of the remains of Geber corpses. At Múrkí Khél, in the valley of Jelálabád, and under the Saféd Koh, human bones are so abundant on the soil that walls are made of them. There is every reason to suppose it a sepulchral locality of the ancient Gebers; and, as if to leave no doubt of it, coins, found in some number there, are invariably of a Geber line of princes, and have the distinguishing fire-altar on them.

It is farther agreed, that amongst the Síáposh

the females are separated from the community, and located in a house set apart for them during the periods of childbirth and menstruation. In the former event, a seclusion of forty days is considered necessary. It is possible that these observances may be in force with Gebers; but they are also adopted by certain classes of Hindús, and by other people, and are not, therefore, to be accepted as testimony to a particular faith.

On the primary subject of religion, reports and opinions are too vague and various to admit even a plausible conjecture to be made. The furious Máhomedan will not concede that they have any; while the less zealous pretend that they reverence trees, and other inanimate objects. The Hindú believes them to cherish, in their retreats, his own anomalous creed, and that they perform púja, on altars. From the testimony, however, of the Síáposh whose fate has made them captives, it is clear that they have some kind of worship, and that their deity is named Dágon. The topic is one on which they dislike to be questioned, either that they are incompetent to reply, or that amongst Máhomedans they feel delicacy in expressing their sentiments. It may be supposed that a strange medley of rites and superstitions prevails among them. While as tenacious of their religion, whatever it may be, as of their liberty in their mountain fastnesses, the Síáposh captive, without hesitation, becomes a Máhomedan, and manifests no

aversion to abandon his old faith. It need not be remarked how different would be the conduct of the most wretched Hindú on such an occasion.

It is generally supposed that chastity is not an accomplishment of the Síáposh ladies, or that a deviation from it is lightly regarded, and easily compensated. Máhomedans also insist, that their high notions of hospitality, and of the attentions due to their guests, induce the Sîáposh to resign their wives to those who reside under their roofs. It is, moreover, affirmed, that marriage ceremonies are extremely simple, consisting merely of procuring two twigs, or rods, of the respective heights of the bride and bridegroom, and tying them together. They are then presented to the couple, who preserve them with much care, as long as they find it agreeable or convenient to live together. If desirous to separate, the twigs are broken, and the marriage is dissolved. Whatever degree of truth may attach to such stories, there is some reason to believe that the Síáposh, in this respect no worse than Máhomedans, do not allow their females an equal rank with themselves in society, and it is commonly credited that the weaker and fairer part of the community undergo many unusual labours, and carry on even all the duties of agriculture. Married women are distinguished from virgins by wearing a ring in the right ear.

The Síáposh are affirmed to build their houses of wood, of several stories in height; it is also said that

they are much embellished with carving. These accounts are trustworthy, as we witness that the Sáfís of Káziabád in the hills west of Lúghmân, and who have been converted, actually reside in such dwellings, and we observe a great taste for carving in the present inhabitants of Lúghmân, who always elaborately decorate the wooden framework at the entrances of their dwellings and castles. From some of the hills of Lúghmân the tall houses of the Síáposh may be distinguished on a clear day. While they are skilful as joiners and carvers, they are equally so as smiths, and are regular customers for the raw iron smelted from the sand ores of Bájor. Whenever mention is made of their drinking-cups and bowls, it is always added, that they are ornamented and embossed in a costly manner.

The testimony of Baber and of Benedict Goez, that they are a social race, and indulge freely in wine, is amply confirmed by the general reports of the present day, and by the fact that their wine is easily procurable. All that I have seen of it was brought in skins, and so sour as to be undrinkable. It is said, however, that they have good wine, and that the better classes, in default of jars, preserve it in cisterns, hewn in the rock. Their neighbours the Nimchas, and Sáfís of Dara Núr, also make wine, and large quantities of vinegar, the latter being an article of traffic, and prized. These people also hive bees, and have many peculiar customs, which are, probably, those of the Síáposh. The natives of

Nadjíl fatten capons, which, it may be gleaned from Baber, the people of Nijrow did in his time.

Amongst the singularities imputed by the Máhomedans to the Síáposh, is their objection to sit on the ground, or to take their repasts on it, and the custom they have of using chairs or stools. That such conveniences are in vogue seems sanctioned by the presence of a low chair in the houses of the poor throughout Lúghmân, and likewise in the houses of the Kogíánís, an old tribe dwelling about Gandamak, and thence to the Saféd Koh, and once more extensively spread over the country. It is possible the custom of sitting in chairs was formerly general in the valleys of Lúghmân and Jelálabád.

They are said to shave the hair of their heads, allowing only a tuft to remain on the crown. In this they assimilate, indeed, to Hindús; but there are also many Máhomedan tribes that do the same. Chiefs, and sons of chiefs, insert their tufts in leathern rings, a token by which, it is believed, they may be distinguished.

War is said to be determined upon in a general council of the chiefs and elders, when a cow is sacrificed, and the meat distributed to all present. The ratification of a truce, or treaty, is signalized by kissing the nipples of their antagonists, and, as usual in all matters of ceremony, is solemnized by a feast. They are said to eat raw meat, or rather meat slightly cooked. The Máhomedan, whose viands must

be overcooked, considers it a proof of barbarism. If true, it would be only a matter of taste in cookery.

The arms of the Síáposh are bows and arrows—the latter thought to be poisoned,—with long knives and daggers. With the bow they are very expert. Those contiguous to the Máhomedans are gradually providing themselves with fire-arms, and procuring coarse cotton cloths and lúnghís, are assimilating also in dress to their neighbours.

The Máhomedans in their wars and forays are glad to secure the persons of the Síáposh; the latter are said almost invariably to slaughter the Máhomedans. In these days the múllas, or priests of Lúghmân, occasionally preach a crusade against the infidels, and in small bands venture on the limits of their lands. Success does not usually tempt a frequent renewal of such expeditions; while they are not generally countenanced, as they lead to severe retaliation. With the Shínwâris of Shígal on the river of Khonar, and with the Sáfís of Dara Péch, the Síáposh are on very hostile terms; with the Tâjiks of Chághanseráí they are on a good understanding, exacting karaj, or tribute, but granting in return, perfect security. The Tâjiks, on their part, if they have notice of an intended foray by the Shínwârís, will inform the Síáposh, whether actuated by fear or inclination. With the natives of Chitrâl, it is believed, they are on a friendly footing; and it is related, that they respect heralds and car-

riers of letters, who pass unmolested through them, having their letters in a bag suspended from the top of a pole, with a wreath of flowers attached to it.

If they have no direct trade with their neighbours on the plains, they have an indirect and trifling one through the medium of the neutral Nimchas, by which they supply themselves with salt, coarse lúnghís, and cotton fabrics, knives, needles, fire-arms, gunpowder, &c., giving in exchange dried fruits, honey, vinegar, wine, &c. From such of their neighbours, who from weakness are compelled to give them karaj, they exact some of the above articles, with earthen jars, which are desirable to them. They formerly collected karaj from many of the towns and villages of Lúghmân, and even now have not entirely desisted. They choose the time when the rivers are swollen, and when the inhabitants of one part cannot cross to the assistance of those in another. They then descend in large bodies; and it is usual to comply with their demands, which are not very serious, to get rid of them. They regulate their conduct according to their reception, and if unopposed employ no violence. Chahár Bâgh of Lúghmân was constantly exposed to their visits, until it was given to Hâjí Khân, as a portion of his jághír. He deemed it disgraceful to permit such exactions, and by locating in the town a competent garrison prevented them.

Some few years since a Geber of Yezd, named

Shâhríár, visited Kâbal, and went in pilgrimage to Lálander, where, agreeably to tradition, Rústam is believed to have been slain. He thence proceeded to Kâfristân, under the conviction that the Kâfrs were Gebers. Malek Osmân, the chief of Nadjíl, to whom he carried letters from Kâbal, expedited him into the country, and enjoined him, for some reason, to return by the same route as that by which he entered. Shâhríár neglected this advice, and coming back was intercepted, and slain by a Máhomedan party from Káziabád. Previous to this affair, there had been a feud of old standing between the Tâjiks of Nadjíl and the Sáfís of Káziabád, which for some time had been suffered to lie dormant. On this occasion the Sáfís fancied that if they could contrive to kill this Geber, the guest of Malek Osmân, the odium would fall upon the malek's head. They succeeded only in part. The malek indignantly resented the murder of Shâhríár: the old feud was revived, and continues in full force.

Amongst the many people I have discoursed with who pretended to have had intercourse with, or to have visited the Síáposh, I know but one to whose narrative I felt inclined to give any confidence. This was one Malek Mannír, who had been in the employ of Akram Khân, a son of the Sirdár Máhomed Azem Khân, and was stationed in Khonar, after the seizure, by the Sirdár of the famous Saiyad Najím. Malek Mannír's

account I have heard repeated at intervals of two and three years between, without variation. It does not contain so much exaggeration as we usually hear, and as his statements on other matters connected with that part of the country I have always found to be correct, it may be worthy of a place here. The malek, a sensible and observant, was not a literate person, and I give his narration in the unconnected manner in which I received it.

"In company with Malek Sir Ballend of Chághansaráí, I went to the Kâfrtown of Kattár. Kâfrs call Máhomedans Odâl, and say they have driven them to the hills, usurping the plains, and eating their rice. The men wear tufts of long hair on the crowns of their shaven heads. Married women wear a ring in the right ear. Corpses are placed in deal boxes, and exposed on a hill. Poles are placed on the boxes, and smaller sticks are made to cross them, if the deceased have slain Máhomedans; the number of cross sticks denoting that of Máhomedans slain by the parties when living. The houses of the Kâfrs are five or six stories in height, and the men are fond of sitting on the tops of them, singing and drinking wine. Adjacent to the town of Kattár was a house set apart for the accommodation of their females during menstruation and childbirth, who under such circumstances are not allowed to remain at their homes. When I asked if they believed in a future state, they laughed, and asked, in turn, in their own

language 'Tút múj, bút jâ'? literally, 'Father dead, rice eat?' In reply to another question, they said their God was at Kâbal, and paid them a visit once a-year on a horse. Asking if they had seen their God, they said they had not; and then asking how they knew that he came, I was answered that their priest, or guardian of the idol, told them so. I was conducted, without any reserve, to the bhút khâna, (house of the idol). At the door was seated a very aged man, the guardian. He rose and opened it. I was led through three or four apartments filled with articles of raiment, swords, shields, knives, &c., the consecrated spoils of Máhomedans. From them I passed into the chamber of the idol, an erect image of black or dark-coloured stone, of the ordinary size of a man. The bad odour proceeding from the apartments filled with the raiments was such, that I could not stay long. Incredulous as to a future state, the Kâfrs believe that sins are visited by temporal calamities; amongst which they reckon drought, pestilence, hail, &c. On the return of a party from a dárra, or foray upon Máhomedans, such as have slain an enemy brandish in triumph over their heads sticks or poles, called shánt, with the clothes of their victims on them. The less fortunate hold their poles behind them. The maidens of the villages issue forth to meet them, their bosoms filled with walnuts and dried fruits, with which the victors are permitted to retire, while

those who have brought no trophy have their faces pelted with ashes and cow-dung. A feast is prepared, and cows are slain; the meat is cut into slices, and parboiled in a large vessel. The lucky individuals receive shares in proportion to the number of Máhomedans they have slain, the others receive single shares, over the shoulders of the person presiding at the feast, and who distributes the contents of the vessels. Broth is unused by the Kâfrs, who say it produces flatulency. Besides meat, they feed largely on cheese. The Kâfrs are very social and hospitable. We had brought as presents to Malek Udúr salt and lúnghís, and when we departed a collection of dried fruits was made from every house in the town for us."

As to the possibility of opening a communication, and establishing an intercourse with the Síáposh, it is allowed by respectable Máhomedans, that there would be no difficulty, provided the capture and conversion of them were discontinued. The late Saiyad Najím of Khonar proved that it was easy to make them peaceable neighbours, and to be respected by them, even although he had waged wars against them. Neither is his instance a solitary one. When Shâh Máhmúd, of Kâbal, released the imprisoned princes of his family, and appointed them to offices and to governments, one of them, to whom Lúghmân was given, became on very good terms with the neighbouring Síáposh. He wished to have erected a fortress at some point

within their frontiers, and they acquiesced. The Vazír Fatí Khân grew jealous of the prince, and of his intentions, and deprived him of the province. Some eight or nine years since the late Amír Máhomed Khân, brother to Dost Máhomed Khân, being in Lúghmân, a deputation of the Síáposh waited upon him, under the guidance of Malek Osmân of Nadjíl. They represented to the sirdár that some Síáposh chief, their enemy, had great wealth, and proffered, that if the sirdár would attack him, they would serve as guides, and otherwise assist him. They were treated civilly, but the wary Amír Máhomed Khân distrusted them.

CHAPTER XII.

Bálla Hissár.—Bazárs.—Baber's Tomb.—Killa Kází.—Maidân.—Killa Dúrání.—Náib Gúl Máhomed. —Hazára Castle.—Arrival at Ghazní.—Reception by Hâjí Khân.—Opinion of coffee.—Reputation of Hâjí Khân.—Armies of Kândahár and of Kâbal. — Ravages of cholera. — Introduction to Dost Máhomed Khân. — His plain attire. — Peace Concluded. — Conversation with Hâjí Khân. — Altercation between Dost Máhomed Khân and Hâjí Khân. — The Army marches from Ghazní. — Dost Máhomed Khân.—Habíb Ulah Khân — Loses power — Is seized by his uncles. — Invitations to Dost Máhomed Khân. — Kâbal given to Súltân Máhomed Khân. — Súltân Máhomed Khân evacuates Kâbal. — Distribution of the country. — Extent of Kâbal.—Revenue.—Military force.—Artillery.—Good Government of Dost Máhomed Khân. — His talents as a chief. — Ghazní.—How acquired by Dost Máhomed Khân.—Is given to Amír Máhomed Khân.—Revenue. — Character of Amír Máhomed Khân — His Avarice — His political severity — Unfortunate as a commander.

We stayed but two or three days in the neighbourhood of Kâbal, the severe mortality discouraging a longer sojourn in a spot otherwise so delightful. On our departure, however, we entered the Bálla Hissár by the Derwâza Shâh Shéhid; and I little imagined that the Armenian quarter into which it leads would, at a future time, become for years my settled place of abode.

We met an Armenian, who recognized me to be an European, and pressed me to spend a day in festivity with him. I declined; and he then accompanied us for some distance, pointing out the palace of Dost Máhomed Khân, the old Dafta Khâna, or Record Office, of the former Sadú Zai princes, and other public buildings. We passed through the crowded bazars of the city, in which the prevalence of the cholera seemed in no manner to diminish the numbers of the rabble, or to affect the activity of trade. We had every reason to admire the abundance of all kinds of provisions and supplies, particularly of fruits, and were much struck with the varieties of costume worn by the individuals we met, plainly showing how great was the influx of strangers to a place so celebrated for its commerce.

We left the city by the defile between the hills Koh Khwoja Safar and Assa Mâhí, and entered upon the level and luxuriant plain of Chahár Déh, having crossed the river by the Púl, or bridge of Sirdár Násir Khân. To our left was the tomb of the Emperor Baber, with its marble masjít and gardens, and numerous castles and villages, seated amid a most beautiful cultivation; while on our right were other castles and villages, and in the distance the snow-clad hills overlooking Peghmân, whose orchards, in so many dark and dense masses, were visible at their skirts. We arrived at Killa Kází, a small village at the extremity of

the plain, towards evening, and halted at it. An individual received us as guests, and led us into his orchard, where we regaled ourselves with apples before partaking of a more substantial meal at his house. In the morning we proceeded to Arghandí, and thence, over a sterile plain, to Maidân, a charming locality, watered by the river of Kâbal, which, flowing from the valleys of Jelléz and Sir Chishmeh, here crosses the line of road, and winding through the glens of Lálandar, directs its course upon the plain of Chahár Déh and the city. We passed the evening at a castle some distance farther on, called Killa Dúrání from its owner, one Shír Máhomed Khân. The next morning we moved on to Tope and Shékhabád, where we crossed the river of Loghar, a more considerable stream than that of Kâbal, and took up our quarters for the evening at the castle of Gúl Máhomed Khân, the Náib of Wardak under Amír Máhomed Khân, the Sirdár of Ghazní. The khân received us with cordiality, partly, perhaps, because he wished advice for an obstinate disease with which he was afflicted. As his castle was a good one, and I understood that he had built it himself, I inquired as to the expense, and he told me two thousand rupees. We had often on the road been passed by small parties of horse and foot, in progress to join Dost Máhomed Khân's camp. The next day we fell in with one of these at a village, the chief of which, a young man, had been seized with

cholera. My companion, the Patán, was very fond of representing himself a Mír, or Saiyad, on our journey, and on this occasion assumed the character of a descendant of the Prophet, in virtue of which he urged the dying man to repeat his kalma, or profession of faith, which he did, and was applauded accordingly. His attendants had purchased a sheep as a kairát, or offering, and we benefited by the act of piety, as we took our dinner with them. They wept over their expiring master, and asserted that he was of a respectable family. We halted for the night at a castle held by Hazáras; who, making no objection to afford us shelter, were unwilling to provide us with supper, which we procured at an adjacent Afghân castle, and then returned. Two or three Lohánís also passed the night with us, and they found the owners of the castle no more hospitably inclined than we had; on which they upbraided them in particular, and their entire race in general, as being infidels, and contrasted the reception they experienced in Loghar, from which it seemed they had just come, with the treatment they now met with. Their rebukes induced the Hazáras to produce milk, which had before been refused; and, as if desirous to wipe off the charge of inhospitality, they added a dish of apricots. The next morning we reached Ghazní, where we found the army encamped on the plain below the town, and we went at once to the tent of Hâjí Khân,

as we had been recommended to do on leaving Kâbal.

Our reception by the khân proved that, if intruders, we were not unwelcome ones; and he immediately signified his wish that I should avail myself of his own tent, so long as I might remain in camp. Some five or six persons, two of them his brothers, were sitting with him, and their conversation naturally enough turned upon Feringhís. The khân much praised their universal knowledge, and equity, and his dicta were apparently received by his auditors with assent. One of these put the question, whether it had not been prophesied in the Korân that the Nassáras, or Christians, were to dominate over the Máhomedan world? The khân replied it was; but it was not certain what Christians were intended, the English or the Russians. The khân promised to introduce me to Dost Máhomed Khân; and a repast was served; after which the kálíún, or chillam, was put before him, and coffee brought in, made by his brother, Hâjí Ahmed Khân. I had not seen this beverage before west of the Indus, and said so; when I learned that Hâjí Ahmed, who had been to Mecca, had acquired a taste for it amongst the Arabs, and that he prided himself upon his skill in preparing it. A dissertation on coffee followed, and a Persian distich was cited, by no means in its favour, as it imputed to it qualities not likely to recommend it to Máhomedans, the husbands of many wives.

After some more conversation, the party broke up, and the khân stretched himself out to repose. As I was unaccustomed to such indulgence, I strolled, with my Patán, about the camp and the environs of Ghazní.

There was no person, not excepting the sirdár, at this time in Afghânistân whose reputation stood higher with the multitude than did that of Hâjí Khân. He was allowed to be a gallant soldier, was considered a firm friend, and, singularly enough, had a character for veracity. I shall not, in this place, enter upon his history, with which I afterwards became better acquainted, as I shall have occasion at a future time to advert to it. It may suffice to observe, that I had no means to appreciate his real character, and freely gave him credit for the virtues which common report attributed to him.

The Kândahár army was now encamped a few miles from Ghazní, and a farther advance would necessarily lead to a conflict. It was computed to be eleven thousand strong, while that of Dost Máhomed Khân was scarcely reckoned to exceed six thousand men, yet no apprehensions were entertained in the Ghazní camp, as the advantages in the efficiency of the troops and the conduct of the leaders, were entirely on the Kâbal side; while it was conjectured that, in the event of collision, the Kândahár force would be disabled by defection. With such impressions, all was confidence, and

the soldiery were occupied with amusements as though no enemy had been at hand.

The cholera, however, had travelled on with the army from Kâbal, and was causing serious loss, both amongst the forces and the inhabitants of Ghazní. My curiosity led me to visit the tomb of the celebrated Súltân Máhomed; and in the courts and gardens belonging to it was displayed a revolting spectacle of disease and misery. Crowds of poor wretches had crawled into them, anxious, possibly, to resign their mortal breath in the sacred spot,—the dying were confounded with the dead,—and almost all were in a state of nudity; either that the miserable sufferers had cast off their own garments, or, as likely, that amongst their fellow men there had been found those base enough to profit by their forlorn state, and to despoil them. Ghazní has numerous zíárats, or shrines, and all of them were now so many charnel-houses.

Hâjí Khân kept his word, and introduced me to Dost Máhomed Khân, a chief of whom I had heard all people speak so favourably, both in and out of his dominions, that I should have regretted to have missed the opportunity of seeing him. He was seated in a very small tent, crowded with people. I had difficulty to push my way through them, but when near him, he gave me his hand and told me to sit down. He was distinguished from his courtiers by his very plain dress of white linen, and at this period was remarkably spare. He smiled and

asked what language he should speak; and being told I could not converse in Pashto or Persian, he spoke in those languages to those near him, and they repeated to me what he said in Hindústání; for I found, that although he well understood that dialect, it was hardly thought becoming in a Dúrání Sirdár to hold communications in it. His questions were few and unimportant, and he had clearly so much business on hand, that he had no time for lengthened conversation. My audience was, therefore, brief, and when I rose to leave he desired Hâjí Khân to bring me to him again when he should be less engaged. The plain attire of Dost Máhomed Khân singularly contrasted with the gay dresses of the chiefs sitting about him; and behind him stood a young man, magnificently clad, who, I was told, was Habíb Ulah Khân, his nephew. The chiefs were very civil to me, and expressed themselves as familiarly as if we had been old acquaintance.

I had been two or three days in the camp, when suddenly a general beating of drums, and flourishes of martial music, announced that the differences between Dost Máhomed Khân and his rival brothers of Kândahár, had been arranged without an appeal to arms. Visits were exchanged between the principal leaders of either army, and Hâjí Khân embraced his elder brother, Gúl Máhomed Khân, who but a short time before he ran the chance of encountering as an opponent in the field

of battle. We were desirous to have accompanied the Kândahâr army on its return, but it decamped so precipitately that it was equally impossible to join it or to overtake it, had we followed.

Hâjí Khân during my stay with him had one morning a private conversation with me, of which I thought little at the time, but have often recalled to memory since, in connexion with his subsequent extraordinary career. He stated, that he had no reason to complain of Dost Máhomed Khân, yet he had many enemies; and he should be well satisfied if the artillery were under the direction of a person in his interest, and of course he wished me to undertake the charge, promising to induce Dost Máhomed Khân to give it to me. His remarks were so pointed that I smiled, and asked him whether he intended that I should consider myself in his service or that of Dost Máhomed Khân. He paused for a moment, and replied, in that of the Sírdar. I, however, explained to him that I had no desire to engage in the service of any one, and only wished to make the best of my way to Persia. He was not quite satisfied, nor altogether disposed to abandon his idea; and having done with me, called my Patân on the one side, and directed him to represent the great advantages which would attend my acceptance of the charge.

As the question of service had been bruited, I less courted a second interview with Dost Máhomed Khân, particularly as the cholera had carried

off one Mír Abdúl Rehmân, the sirdár's chief of artillery, and I had been told that he had said, when the loss was reported to him, that my arrival was a lucky accident. Hâjí Khân, however, had spoken to him on the subject, and the sirdár, while willing to have made overtures himself, it seemed was not so pleased to attend to the directions of his vazír,—for so the khân considered himself,—and I heard that many high words passed, the khân professing to be indignant that his counsels should be slighted. He then attacked Dost Máhomed Khân on another point, and insisted that it behoved him to give me a horse, and a present of money to enable me to continue my journey to the west. The sirdár was no more consenting to the one proposition than to the other, and Hâjí Khân admonished him that one of the duties of his station was to show liberality to all strangers, especially to Feringhís, that they might go satisfied from his country, and give him a good name.

The khân informed me, when he returned to his tent in the evening, what had passed between him and the sirdár, and assured me, in return to my protestations that I needed nothing, that he would again bring the matter forward in the morning. By daybreak an uproar was manifest in the direction of Dost Máhomed Khân's tents, and people came, telling us that the sirdár had struck his tents and was about to march. The khân was surprised, and remarking, "Does he march without

informing me?" went hastily to commune with his chief, having given orders to his attendants to make ready for marching. In the confusion which arose, I and my Patán went towards the town; and presently the plain was covered with bodies of horse, and strings of laden animals, moving, as we found, upon the Súlímân Khél province of Zúrmat.

Dost Máhomed Khân was emphatically designated by his brother, the Vazír Fatí Khân, as one of the swords of Khorasân, the other being Shír Dil Khân, a former shirdár of Kândahár; and these two, it is said, were the only ones of the vazír's many brothers in whose favour he so far dispensed with etiquette as to permit them to be seated in his presence. It is not my intention to narrate the particulars of the acquisition of Kâbal by Dost Máhomed Khân. It may, however, be generally observed, that on the demise of the Sirdár Máhomed Azem Khân the authority here devolved upon his son, Habíb Ulah Khân, together with considerable treasures. The incapacity for government of this youth, rash, headstrong, profuse, and dissipated, was soon evident; and his misconduct invited the attempts of his ambitious uncles to supplant him. Dost Máhomed Khân, in possession of Ghazní, and in charge of the Kohistân of Kâbal, was first in the field, but Habíb Ulah, who was personally extremely brave, was enabled, by means of his treasure, to repel repeated attacks. Still he was much pressed; when the Sirdárs of Kândahár and Peshâwer, fear-

ful that Dost Máhomed Khân might prevail, and anxious to participate in the spoil of their nephew, marched, avowedly to assist him, and reached Kâbal. From this time a series of most extraordinary events occurred: the authority of the son of Máhomed Azem Khân had virtually ceased, and the only question remaining to be decided was as to the appropriation of his wealth and power. The Kândahár and Pesháwer Sirdárs in coalition had possession of Kâbal, Dost Máhomed Khân standing alone, and opposed to them. He, who had once been the assailant upon Habíb Ulah Khân, now asserted himself his defender, and a strange succession of skirmishes, negotiations, truces, perjuries, &c. followed. The state of anarchy had, nevertheless, endured so long that thinking people began to reflect it was necessary some efforts should be made to bring it to a termination, and the Sirdárs of Kândahár contributed to bring about a crisis by perfidiously seizing, first the person of their nephew, and then his treasures. It may have been their design to have retained Kâbal, but their tyranny was so excessive that the people no longer hesitated to form leagues for their expulsion. The attention of most men was turned upon Dost Máhomed Khân, as a fit instrument to relieve the country, and the Kazilbáshes, in particular, opened a communication with him,—then a fugitive in the Kohistân,—and urged him to renew his efforts; of course assuring him of their assistance. Hâjí Khân,*

in the service of the Kândahár Sirdárs, perceiving the turn affairs were taking, also secretly allied himself with the Kohistân chief, as did the Nawâb Jábar Khân, with many other leading men of the city, and of the country at large. Dost Máhomed Khân was soon again in arms, and as soon approached Kâbal. The combined sirdárs, aware of the precarious tenure of their sway, and of the confederacy against them, thought fit to yield to the storm rather than to brave its fury, and therefore entered into fresh arrangements, by which they left Kâbal in charge of Súltân Máhomed Khân, one of the Peshâwer Sirdárs. The Kândahár Sirdárs retired with their spoils. The claims of Hábib Ulah Khân were forgotten by all parties, and it was still hoped to exclude Dost Máhomed Khân from Kâbal. Súltân Máhomed Khân governed Kâbal for about a year without gaining the good opinion of any one, and as he discouraged the Kazilbásh interest, that faction still inclined to Dost Máhomed Khân. The latter chief, availing himself of a favourable opportunity, suddenly invested his half-brother in the Bálla Hissár, or citadel. The means of defence were inadequate, and mediation was accepted; the result of which was that Súltân Máhomed Khân retired to Peshâwer. Dost Máhomed Khân, engaging to remit him annually the sum of one lákh of rupees, became master of Kâbal and its dependencies.

A new distribution was the consequence of this

sirdár's elevation. Ghazní, with its districts, was confirmed to Amír Máhomed Khân; the Ghiljí districts east of Kâbal, and in Lúghmân, were made over to the Nawâb Jabár Khân; and Bámíân was assigned to Hâjí Khân. Hábib Ulah Khân was deemed worthy of notice, and was allowed to retain one thousand horse in pay, while Ghorband was given to him, in jághír. Dost Máhomed Khân had more claimants on his generosity than it was in his power to satisfy, and from the first was circumscribed in his finances. Kâbal is but a small country, extending westward to Maidân; beyond which the province of Ghazní commences, and eastward to the kotal, or pass of Jigdillak, the frontier of Jelálabád. To the north it extends to the base of the Hindú Kosh, a distance of forty to fifty miles, while to the south it can scarcely be said to extend twenty miles, there being no places of any consequence in that direction.

The revenue enjoyed by Dost Máhomed Khân, including that of Ghazní, Lúghmân, &c., was estimated at fourteen lákhs of rupees, and strenuous efforts were making to increase it, especially by enforcing tribute from the neighbouring rude tribes, who, for a long time profiting by the confusion reigning in the country, had withheld payment. Dost Máhomed Khân had already coerced the Jájí and Túrí tribes of Khúram, and of Kost, and was preparing to reduce the Súlímân Khél tribes of Zúrmat. His brother, Amír Máhomed Khân, col-

lects revenue from the Hâzáras of Bísút; and it is contemplated to reduce to submission the Sáfí tribes of Taghow.

Of the military force of the country, or of such portion of it as on ordinary occasions can be brought into the field, an idea may be formed by what has been noted of the army collected at Ghazní. It was computed to consist of six thousand men, while the Nawâb Jabár Khân, with seven hundred men, was stationed at Jelálabád, and other bodies were necessarily dispersed over the country. The Nawâb Máhomed Zemân Khân, as an ally of Dost Máhomed Khân, was, indeed, in the camp, but had brought only his specially retained troops; and on this occasion it was plain that Dost Máhomed Khân had made no extraordinary efforts, as the íljárí, or militia of the country, was not called upon to serve.

He had about twelve pieces of artillery with him, which were much better looked after and provided than those of Kândahár; three or four other pieces are with his brother in Ghazní, and the Nawâb Máhomed Zemân Khân has some half a dozen more, which I passed at Bállabâgh, and which he did not carry with him. It is also probable there were other pieces at Kâbal.

The assumption of authority by Dost Máhomed Khân has been favourable to the prosperity of Kâbal, which, after so long a period of commotion, required a calm. It is generally supposed that he

will yet play a considerable part in the affairs of Khorasân.

He is beloved by all classes of his subjects, and the Hindú fearlessly approaches him in his rides, and addresses him with the certainty of being attended to. He administers justice with impartiality, and has proved that the lawless habits of the Afghân are to be controlled. He is very attentive to his military; and, conscious how much depends upon the efficiency of his troops, is very particular as to their composition. His circumscribed funds and resources hardly permit him to be regular in his payments, yet his soldiers have the satisfaction to know that he neither hoards nor wastes their pay in idle expenses.

Dost Máhomed Khân has distinguished himself, on various occasions, by acts of personal intrepidity, and has proved himself an able commander, yet he is equally well skilled in stratagem and polity, and only employs the sword when other means fail. He is remarkably plain in attire, and would be scarcely noticed in darbár but for his seat. His white linen raiment afforded a strange contrast to the gaudy exhibition of some of his chiefs, especially of the young Habíb Ulah Khân, who glitters with gold. In my audience of him in the camp at Ghazní, I should not have conjectured him a man of ability, either from his conversation or from his appearance; but it becomes necessary to subscribe

to the general impression; and the conviction of his talent for government will be excited at every step through his country. A stranger must be cautious in estimating the character of a Dúránì from his appearance merely; a slight observer, like myself, would not discover in Dost Máhomed Khân the gallant warrior and shrewd politician; still less, on looking at the slow pacing, coarse-featured Hâjí Khân, would he recognize the active and enterprising officer, which he must be believed to be, unless we discredit the testimony of every one.

Of Dost Máhomed Khân's personal views there can be little known, as he is too prudent to divulge them, but the unpopularity of his brothers would make it easy for him to become the sole authority in Khorasân. I have heard that he is not inimical to the restoration of the King Sújah al Múlkh, and it is a common saying with Afghâns, "How happy we should be if Shâh Sújah were Pádshâh, and Dost Máhomed Vazír."

The king, it is known, has a sister of Dost Máhomed Khân in his háram, but how he became possessed of her is differently related. Some say, he heard that she was a fine woman, and forcibly seized her; others, that she was given to him with the due consent of all parties. Dost Máhomed Khân, and his brother at Ghazní, are supposed by some to be Shías, as their mother is of that persuasion. They do not, however, profess to be so to

their Súni subjects, although possibly allowing the Shía part of the community to indulge in a belief flattering to them.

The principality of Ghazní is held by Amír Máhomed Khân, full brother of Dost Máhomed Khân, and was acquired by the latter some years since from Kadam Khân, a governor on behalf of Shâh Máhmúd. Dost Máhomed Khân, it is said, called the unfortunate governor to a conference at the town gate, shot him, and entered the place. He was allowed to retain his acquisition; and attending his interests in other quarters, consigned it to the charge of his brother. In the many vicissitudes which subsequently befel him, Ghazní, more than once, became a place of refuge to him, and he always contrived to preserve it; and on finally becoming master of Kâbal, he made it entirely over to his brother, who had been eminently useful in advancing his views, and was entitled to so much consideration.

Dependent upon Ghazní are the districts of Náni, Oba, Kárabâgh, and Mokar, on the road to Kândahár, and the province of Wardak on the road to Kâbal, with Náwar to the north of this line, and Shilgar, with Logar, to the south-east and east. Under the kings the revenue is said to have been fixed at two lákhs of rupees, but Amír Máhomed Khân realizes much more, besides obtaining eighty thousand rupees from Wardak, and forty thousand

rupees from Logar, not included, I believe, in the estimate of two lákhs.

This sirdár is reported as exercising zillam, or tyranny; yet, although he is severe and rapacious, and governs his country with a strong steady hand, he is not altogether unpopular, either with his subjects or his soldiery. The former know that he will have his dues, and that they must live in peace with each other, but they are also certain that he will not beyond this molest them, and above all that he will not vexatiously annoy them. The soldiery are conscious that he requires strict obedience, and that they should be always ready for his service, but then they are secure of their pay. He is continually intent upon enriching and strengthening himself, but unwisely, in promoting his own selfish projects, tends to impoverish his subjects; for, shrewd as he is, he has not the sense to know that the best strength of a ruler is the prosperity of those he governs. But for such reasons, his administrative talents would command every commendation, and his well-filled stores and magazines might be looked upon with great complacency. As governor of Ghazní he has put down every chief within his jurisdiction whom he deemed likely, from character or command of resources, to offer opposition to his measures; some even he has put to death, and on that account has incurred odium. Yet, in the advance of the Kândahár army upon Ghazní

no one thought of joining it, and at Nání the Hazára owners of a castle ventured to defend it, and slew several of the invaders. Fúr Dil Khân, moreover, drew off his men, remarking, that he could not afford to lose troops before castles, as he should want them in the approaching battle.

Amír Máhomed Khân, in political matters, identifies himself with his brother Dost Máhomed Khân, who reposes confidence in him, which he dares not place upon any other person. Neither does the Kâbal chief object to his brother's advancing his own particular views, aware that he has no designs hostile to himself.

As a commander, Amír Máhomed Khân, while allowed to be prudent, and not wanting in personal valour, is not esteemed a very fortunate one, which may perhaps be owing to his astonishing corpulency, which unfits him for any great activity. The bustling state of affairs has often brought him into action, particularly in the Kohistân of Kâbal ; and the rebels there, when they heard that the unwieldly Sirdár was sent against them, would rejoice, for they concluded that he would certainly be beaten. It may be remarked, that while he possesses absolute power at Ghazní, it is understood that he holds it under his brother.

CHAPTER XIII.

Dangers of the road. — Lohání khairí. — Violence of the Ghiljís.— Deliberations on our route.—Tower.—Substitute for chillam.— Escape detection. — Lohání party. — Lake Abistáda. — Lohání khairí.— Cautious progress. — My Patán threatens to leave me. —Adventure with shepherd youths.—Represented to be a Shâhzâda. — Khân Terik — His sons. — Our entertainment. —The Khân's conversation — His Castle.—Reception by Bakhtíárís.— Rude Afghâns. — Passage of hills.—Recognition by a Lohání.— Tarnak river. — Sadú Zai Khân. — Difficulty to procure food.— Tarnak water. — Column Tírandâz. —Killa Azem. —Presumption of my Patán—His dilemma.—Arrival at Kândahár.

Our journey from Kâbal to Ghazní had been one wherein little danger was to be apprehended, and we now understood that we might probably pass on without interruption as far as Mokar, the limit of Amír Máhomed Khân's rule, but that beyond it we ought not to expect that the independent Ghiljís would allow us to traverse their country without putting us to some inconvenience. We determined, however, to proceed at once, without waiting an indefinite period for companions, and relied on our good fortune and dexterity to carry us through the much-dreaded Thokís. We had supplied ourselves, when passing through the bazar at Kâbal, with barraks or cloaks of camel-hair, and

our principal fear was that they might be taken from us, which would have reduced us to great distress, as we needed them by night, when the cold was severe.

We started from Ghazní, and a long march brought us to Kárabâgh, where we left the road, and gained a Lohání khairí, or assemblage of tents. There was a small Patán mud hamlet adjacent, near which the people of the khairí were collected, some smoking, and others amusing themselves in a kind of Pyrrhic-dance, describing a large circle, and brandishing their swords. The evening time of prayer arrived, and the company retired to the masjít, leaving me alone with the Patáns of the hamlet, one of whom, who had just joined, asked the others who I was; and being told that I was a Feringhí, and travelling for "sél," or amusement, he inquired what sél there could be in a country where there was not a tree,—and taking up stones, he cried to me "Lár, lár!" or, be off. The others imitated him; and I was instantly surrounded by the ruffians, who shouted loudly, while each held a stone within his hand; one of them with a short thick stick, seized me by the throat, and directed a blow at my head. Aware of my danger, and that the stroke, if given, would have been the signal for a volley of stones, I made extraordinary efforts and stopped it with my hand, and afterwards held the fellow's arm so firmly that

he had to struggle for its release. At this moment a Lohání, who descried my peril, came from the khairí, and taking me by the hand, led me away. In the morning I was so disgusted with the evening's adventure that I hesitated as to what course to adopt, and whether to return to Ghazní, or to throw myself into the Hazára country, and endeavour to pass by representing ourselves as pilgrims to Meshed. The impracticability of the high road was asserted by all we spoke to; indeed, the day before we had met persons returning from Mokar, having been first rifled. Robbery, if a necessary evil, would be to us a grievous one; but the disposition to violence was a new feature in the savage character, which I had no inclination to encounter. Our Lohání friends pointed out a road through what they called their own, or the Lohání country, by which they usually travelled to Kândahár, and which was considerably to the left, or south of the high road. My Patán, who disapproved of the Hazára route from his religious prejudices, recommended us to trust to God, and to proceed by the indicated road, and I yielded to his counsel without being certain that I was acting wisely.

Again in motion, we crossed a most sterile and desolate tract, in which we fell in with a few huts, in the last of which we saw a Hindú, who was obliged to crawl into his house, the door not being large enough to admit him otherwise. We

procured some cakes of bread at a Lohání khairí; and after having been the whole day on foot, we reached at night, after crossing a small salt-water stream, a husbandman's solitary tower, standing in the midst of a patch of cultivated land. We found it occupied by a Ghiljí, and we proposed to stay the night, making use of some hay near at hand for our beds. There was a village distant about two miles, under a low range of hill, to which the Ghiljí suggested we should repair; but we objected that we were weary. He gave us a cake of bread, which was divided. This poor man had no chillam, and as a substitute had made two holes in the ground, connecting them with a hollow reed: the tobacco he placed at the one end, and having lighted it, he filled his mouth with water, and lying flat upon the ground, inhaled the smoke. I attempted to do the same, but not knowing how to manage the water, I was nearly choked, and spirted the contents of my mouth over the machine. The old Afghân was very wroth, and reproached me for want of manners. It was well, perhaps, he did not know that I was a Feringhí and infidel.

The next day, in our progress over the wild country, we met a shepherd lad, who directed us to his khairí, a long distance from our road, but where we went, in the hopes of obtaining our morning's meal. We found our pastoral friend had overrated the hospitality of his tribe, and we

were in bad temper, having wandered unprofitably so far from our path. We passed for some time amongst low rounded hills and elevations, and at length reached a spot where was a stone-built house, of one apartment, and a plot of cultivated land. Here were several men, besides the master of the house; one of them noticed my pantaloons, which were rather tight fitting, and said they were like the Feringhí dress, but nothing farther passed. When they were gone, the good old man who lived here, and who was a múlla, said he knew all the time that I was a Feringhí, but said nothing, as the men were all bad in his country, and might have done me harm. We regained the high road, and in course of time fell in with a small party of Lohánís, halting for the mid-day in a place where there was no shade or shelter of any kind, but such as they contrived to make by suspending their lúnghís and garments on poles. They had two or three camels; and near there were two holes, with a little water in them. We partook of the Lohánís' fare, consisting of bread steeped in roghan, and afterwards reposed; but although covered with my barrak I was nearly broiled by the excessive heat. We started with the Lohánís towards evening, not only because they were following our road, but that they invited us to pass the night at their khairí. About sunset we arrived at the lake Abistáda, extending as far as the

eye could reach to the south. I left the party, intending to slake my thirst in its waters, and was mortified to find them salt. The lake was filled with red-legged white fowl, and did not appear deep for a great distance from its margin, as they were clearly standing in it. In rejoining the party I had to run a little to avoid being intercepted by two or three fellows who, observing my movements, endeavoured to cut me off. North of the lake was the Loháni khairí, which was a large one of many tents. It chanced that the night was one of festival, or feast, and the males of the khairí sat down to a common supper. I did not join them, having been provided with a tent, but was so bountifully supplied with their good fare that I was compelled to observe they were too generous, when I was told that I should need what I could not then eat, for the morrow.

On leaving this khairí we came upon a cultivated plain, on which the harvest was collecting. There were several Ghiljí villages on our right, and many individuals were dispersed about, employed in the labours of the field. We avoided these as well as we could, but not without being twice or thrice hailed, when the Patán went forward and communed, while I sat on the ground until he returned,—both of us judging it better I should keep from observation. By dodging about the fields we much increased the length of our road; but it was necessary, as the Ghiljís are so

accustomed to rapine, that we could not otherwise have escaped. About this time I chanced, in conversation with the Patán, to use an English exclamation, which he conjectured to be a term of abuse, and he threatened to leave me. I coolly went on, and told him he was at liberty to do as he pleased, and shortly after he came up, and, expressing himself in fair language, suffered the affair to drop. This man was certainly of use, but I felt how much I was at his mercy, which he on this occasion seemed willing to let me know. I did not believe he intended to quit me, but suspect he wanted an apology for what he considered abuse, which I did not think fit to make, as he was in error.

Our course led to a few mulberry trees, shading a spring of water at the foot of a low range of hills, or rather elevations, which divided the country we had traversed, belonging to the Thokís, under Shahábadín Khân, from that of the Terikí Ghiljís under Khân Terik. Halting here during the heat of the day, towards the afternoon we entered the range, and were well in it when we passed two shepherd youths, sitting upon the summit of a small hill overlooking the road. They were playing on their pipes of reed, and looked like innocence itself. They asked a few questions, and the Patán answered them, saying, also, that we were Saiyads. We passed on, but had not gone far when we heard a shouting, and looking behind, beheld the two

youths running after us with long poles, and their arms extended like wings. They hallooed and called upon us to stop, swearing we were not Saiyads. As they neared us we picked up stones, and succeeded in moderating their impetuosity, and, by alternately walking briskly and turning to keep them at a due distance, we contrived to make good way. Our chance of escaping plunder now depended upon clearing the hills without meeting other persons, who might join the youths, and we fortunately did so. As soon as we gained the level plain they stood still, and finding they could get nothing else, asked for the Saiyad's blessing. The Patán held up his hands, as they, now distant, did theirs, and charitably consigned them to Dúzak and perdition.

The plain we were now in was of large extent, and bounded in front by a range of high hills. Many fixed villages were scattered on its surface, and there was a good deal of cultivation. We made for a black tent, where we were civilly received, and my Patán had the effrontery to tell the simple owner that I was a Shâhzâda, or Zadú Zai prince. He asked, why, in that case, I ventured to Kândahár; and the Patân said that I was poor, and the sirdárs therefore would take no notice of me. A repast was prepared of cakes of bread and krút, and our feet, as well as hands, were washed before it was served. While we were eating the wives of the Afghân stood behind us with ladles of hot roghan,

which they occasionally poured upon the krút; and when we had finished they took what was left to make their own meals upon. We then went to a grove of mulberry-trees adjoining a village, and took our rest. In the evening we started for the castle of Khân Terik, and were wilfully misdirected, so that it was sunset before we reached it. I was here no longer a Saiyad or Shâhzâda, and the khân made us welcome. He showed me his hands covered with pimples, and requested medicine that they might be removed. Khân Terik was about fifty years of age, stern in features, but kind in manner; untutored, as most Afghân khâns are, but considered refined even at Kândahár. He had three or four handsome boys, his sons, who were gaily dressed in red silk trowsers, and fine white muslin shirts. The eldest went out, and returned with a load of fresh trefoil, and one of the younger ones, observing that my shoes were hard and dry, went into the inner apartments of the castle, and brought out a lump of sheep's fat, with which he did me the honour to rub them.

A camel being noted wandering on the plain, all the khân's servants were despatched to secure it, and it was brought as a prize into the castle. It is just to add, that it was restored when claimed, soon afterwards. At night we were accommodated on a takht, or sofa, adjoining the entrance into the private apartments, and had a supper of cakes and mutton, with roghan and sugar. We were furnished

with felts and coverlets, and the khân sat with us for some time after supper. He talked about Kândahár and its sirdárs; and I gleaned that he had most esteem for Kohan Dil Khân. His brother had the charge of attending on me, and providing me frequently with the chillam. In the morning we were not suffered to depart before we had taken breakfast. I inquired of the khân as to the distance of Kândahár, and he replied that he did not know, but that, estimating the journeys made by walking from morning until night, it was three days distance.

The khân's castle, a recently built one, is considered handsome by the Ghiljís. It is merely the common square castle, with towers at the angles, but is kept in good repair, and its walls are pierced with matchlock holes. Contiguous is a fine garden and orchard, well stocked with young fruit-trees. Within the castle, half the space is occupied by the private apartments of the khân and his family, and the other half is a court, surrounded with the rooms of his dependants, and with stables. His stud consisted but of one good horse and six or seven inferior ones. Khân Terik is the head of the Terikí tribe, and is dependent, more or less, upon the Sirdárs of Kândahár.

Leaving the castle, we made a very long march, and about sunset were for some time searching amongst the hills for a Bakhtíarí khairí, to which we had been advised to go. We were lodged in

a building, of which one half served for a masjít and the other for a rendezvous for the people of the khairí. Here assembled both the young and the old men to converse, to sing, and to smoke. A youth brought a fair quantity of tobacco, which he tied up in a corner of my shirt, and which, considering its comparative value here, was a great present.

The next day we crossed a fine stream, possibly the Lora, which waters Peshing and Shoráwak, and there was a large khairí on its banks, which we did not, however, visit. Having approached some hills, and it being mid-day, we went towards three or four tents we observed, and on entering the first of them found a man and his wife, the former lying naked on the ground. He wrapped a cloth around him, and as the Patán avowed himself to be a Mír, and I was said to be a Saiyad of Hindústân, he directed his wife to prepare bread for us, in return for which he was to receive a charm. While the simple repast was in progress, our host observed that I resembled a Hazára, and my Patán busied himself in twisting threads, on which he very devoutly breathed, and gave them to the Afghân, to be worn around his neck.

From the information here received, my companion proposed to push on without resting, as usual, at mid-day, as we had some defiles to pass through, in which it would be as well to meet no one; and at this time of day the country people generally

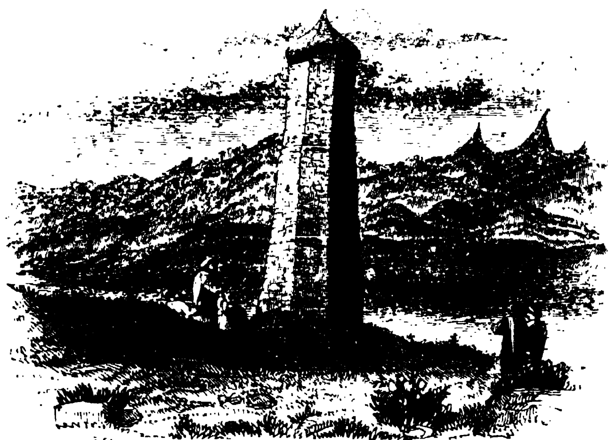
sleep. We soon entered the hills, and a slight ascent brought us to the summit, whence a long descent followed. We luckily fell in with no person whatever, and found ourselves in the Dúrání country dependant on Kândahár. Amongst these hills the hollyhock was naturally growing. We passed the evening at a khairí, and fixed ourselves at the masjít, which here was merely a square piece of ground, marked by stones, and set apart for prayers. I was noticed at this place for not joining the multitude in the pious offices of the evening; and, notwithstanding I excused myself by pretending sickness, and lay down, I could not save myself from two or three kicks. A Lohání coming from Kândahár joined us, and although he recognized me to be a Feringhí, he behaved discreetly and kept the secret. When we were alone, he inquired why I could venture to rove amongst people so wild, and proffered to place me with all safety in Múltân, if I would accompany him. The good men of the khairí provided us with cakes of bread for supper, and with felts and clothing for the night; but as nothing was furnished to eat with the bread, the Lohání said they were infidels, and produced from his own stores a bag of almonds.

The next day we reached a castle, the dwellings within which were covered with domes—the first we observed, although we afterwards found they were general in Kândahár and its vicinity. We then crossed some table-lands, with the surface overspread

with agates, and then made a small hamlet, where we procured two or three cucumbers, but no more substantial food. We next gained the bank of the Tarnak river, which we traced for some time, and finally crossed the stream, when we fell in with the high road from Kândahár to Ghazní and Kâbal. The villages we found were situated some distance from it, as my Patán said, to avoid the intrusion of troops passing; the direction in which they lie may, however, be ascertained by the paths leading to them. We followed one of such paths, and found a village, where the khân, a Sadú Zai, was seated under a tree with his people. We sat down and conversed with him, while he made his breakfast of bread, curds, and melons; after which he retired within his castle. Here we found it difficult to procure food, no one seemed inclined to give or to sell; on which the Patán applied to the khân, who sent out a cake, and presently after, a woman, for the consideration of five Kâbal pais, prepared more bread for us. On regaining the high road the Patán, as our bread had been cooked without salt, drank of the Tarnak water, as he said to promote digestion, the river being, according to him, sanghín or heavy, that is, imbued slightly with a saline principle from the soil through which it flows. We afterwards reposed for a time in the shade of a column standing near the road side.

This structure was built of burned bricks, and was, perhaps, thirty-five or forty feet high. It is

called Tírándâz, and is believed to denote the spot at which an arrow from the bow of Ahmed Shâh fell, the monarch standing on an eminence of the hills near. It may, however, be more ancient, as the eminence alluded to alike exhibits some vestiges of former buildings.



COLUMN TIRANDAZ.

Near the column we passed the zíárat, or shrine of an Akhúnd, and towards sunset turned from the road and found a village, where we fell in with a khân of respectability, and some of the artillery-men of Kândahár, with their gun, which had been disabled on their return from Ghazní.

On the following day we gained Killa Azem, a large village with castle, where my Patán finding some people acquainted with Mír Kamaradín of Pesháwer, boldly asserted himself to be a nephew of

the Mír. The appearance of this man was so rude that I wondered any one could be deceived by his pretended relationship with the venerated Pír, but his tale seemed to be credited here. When the villagers assembled for evening prayer, the pésh namáz, or person who stands before the congregation and recites prayers, in deference to the Patán's supposed sanctity and affinity, wished him to officiate in his stead, and a long contest of civility ensued, which amused me not a little, as my companion was so illiterate that he could not repeat his prayers. Of course he declined the proffered honour, and fell in with the group behind, where he had nothing to do but to imitate them in the required genuflexions and prostrations, mumbling what he pleased to himself.

The next day we reached the city of Kândahár, and went to the house of Hamaradín Khân, a Bárak Zai, and relative of the sirdár's. As soon as the khân was apprised of my arrival he expressed pleasure that I had come to his house, and assured me that I might stay at it as long as might be agreeable to me.

CHAPTER XIV.

Interview with Fúr Dil Khân.—Friendly Mírza.—Son of Taimúr Kúlí Khân.—Important question and decision.—Krút.—Incivility of Káshmírí servant.—Máhomed Sídik Khân.—Náib Gúl Máhomed Khân—His seizure—Vigilance of sirdárs.—The Náib's release.—His son.—Kândahár.—Its predecessors.—Bazars.—Supply of water.—Composition of the city and population.—Tomb of Ahmed Shâh.—Palaces and citadel.—Fruits.—Provisions.—Interesting objects.—The sirdárs.—The late Shír Dil Khân.—Fúr Dil Khân.—His character and government.—His career.—Kohan Dil Khân.—Meher Díl Khân—His hypocrisy.—Dissentions of the sirdárs—Their reconciliation.—Khodâ Nazzar.—Tyranny of the sirdárs.—Revenue.—Division of the country.—Extent of authority.—Balochistân tributary.—Jealousy of Dost Máhomed Khân.—Rahám Dil Khân's mission.—His ill success at Ták.—His present to Ranjit Singh.—Rahám Dil Khân's arrangements.—Dost Máhomed Khân's counteracting measures.—Activity of Saiyad Ahmed Shâh.—Negotiations.—Treaty.—Confidence of Dost Máhomed Khân's troops.—Consequences of operations.—Dost Máhomed Khân's conquests.—Military force of Kândahár.—Resources.—Artillery.—Sirdárs unpopular.—Misgivings of my Patán companion.—He joins Attá Máhomed Khân.—Inability to reach Gríshk.—Fortunate escape.—Determine to visit Shikárpúr.—Kindness of Kândahár friends.

Hamaradin Khan was a very respectable chief, and although he did not trouble us much, made it a point to call every morning, and sit some five minutes before breakfast. I soon found it would be

necessary to see the Sirdár Fúr Dil Khân, as he had received an intimation of my arrival, and accordingly I waited upon him at his house one evening. The sirdár was seated in an enclosure, called the Súrat Khâna, or portrait-chamber, and the walls were indeed covered with paintings of females, which did some little credit to the skill of the artists, and to the taste of the sirdár who had called it forth. The area was filled with flowers. He surprised me by asking, if I was not the Feringhí who had been at Ták and Peshâwer, and without being very communicative, expressed his astonishment that Hindústân was not the native country of Europeans, as he had supposed it to be. He addressed himself to Mírza Yaiya, his confidential secretary, who was standing behind him, and directed him to be most attentive to my wants, and to take especial care that I lacked nothing; when some of his people remarking to me that I must remain in the sirdár's service, and I replying in a decided tone that I would not, he rescinded his prior orders, and observed to his mírza that it was not necessary to be so attentive. My interview with the sirdár was productive of just so much benefit, that as he had not objected to my stay at Kândahár, and as it was of course known that I had seen him, I was held at liberty to remain as long as I pleased.

One day as I was passing up the bazar a stout, good-humoured elderly man, a mírza, who was sitting in one of the shops, seized my hand, and saying

that every Feringhí was his friend, insisted that I should go with him to his house, near at hand, and limping, for he was lame, conducted me to it. He produced a flagon of spirits, and wished me to drink, but I excused myself, and he ordered the kalíún. He informed me, that he had been at Bombay, and had taken a letter from the Sirdár Rahám Dil Khân to Elphinstín Sáhib, and he exhibited an Arabic Bible, presented to him by that gentleman. I asked him if he ever read it, and he replied, "Yes."

I became acquainted with many persons, and amongst others, with a son of the late Sirdár Taimúr Kúlí Khân, and he was so urgent that I should spend some time at his house, that having obtained the consent of Hamaradín Khân, I complied. Nothing could exceed the civility of my new host, and he was milder in disposition, and more amiable in manners than Dúrání noblemen generally are. He complained that his circumstances were straitened, although he had horses, villages, and servants; but perhaps he was piqued at the neglect of his uncles the sirdárs, recollecting that his father had been an elder brother of the Bárak Zai family, and that he had fallen in action with the Síkhs. The khân always took his breakfast at noon with me, and the evening's repast, or supper, in his private apartments, with his ladies. On the occasion of his first meal with me, his násir, or steward, who was a Káshmírí,

and insolent, as many of his race are, observed, that it was not proper to eat with me, because not being a Máhomedan I was unclean. The khân asked two or three people, who were also present, for information, and they decided against the Káshmírí. He, however, was still positive, and the khân sent for a neighbouring ákhúnd of repute to settle the point. The man at once pronounced the objection absurd, and being invited to sit down, became one of the party. The khân had gardens about three miles from the city, whither we often made excursions, passing two or three days there at a time. I had often tasted krút, the universal and favourite aliment of the Afghâns, but never enjoyed it so much as at this place, where it was really well prepared, and with the addition of fried bádinjâns and excellent bread made an admirable dish.

I had remained some time with the friendly khân, and suffered no inconvenience, but from the incivility of his Káshmírí servant, who, naturally prone to mischief, never forgave his defeat on the question of its being improper to eat with me. He had a complete ascendancy over his weak master, who scarcely ventured to rebuke him. And I believe that he was even angered because I would not reply to him, or notice his rude conduct. Still it did not cease; and as it incommoded me, I took the opportunity, when the khân had gone to one of his villages on business, to remove to the citadel,

where I became the guest of Sirafráz Khân, a Rohilla chief of three hundred men, in the service of the Sirdár Meher Dil Khân.

The Sirdár Kohan Dil Khân, alone of the several sirdárs, resided in the fortress; and I had hardly been located there when I was sent for by his son, Máhomed Sídik Khân, a fine intelligent youth. He showed me his stock of curiosities; amongst which was a box of European prints, to be seen through a magnifying glass, and which he seemed to prize highly. After our acquaintance had commenced I was very much with him, being sent for whenever fruits were brought to him, when he strolled about the gardens of Shâlímár within the citadel, or when he amused and exercised himself at archery. I was present when he celebrated his first nuptials with a daughter of my first Kândahár friend, Hamaradín Khân; and the next morning he sent for me to partake of some melons. An âkhúnd was also there; and the young khân, hiding his face in the old man's lap, expatiated rather pruriently on the raptures his new state had opened to him. At this time he received from his father the government of Gríshk, a fortress on the Helmand river, and, as he intended to go and reside there, he proposed to me to accompany him.

When I reached Kândahár it was understood that the sirdárs contemplated a march upon Shikárpúr; and that Náib Gúl Máhomed Khân was

to remain in charge of the city during their absence. This man had great influence, and was of the Popal Zai tribe. He had originally been Kámrân's governor at Kândahár, and surrendered it to the Bárak Zai Sirdárs, who besieged it, when Kámrân informed him that he did not intend to march to its relief. By his means, therefore, in some measure, the sirdárs acquired the city they have since held, and Gúl Máhomed Khân, distrustful, perhaps, of placing himself in the power of Shâhzâda Kámrân, remained with them, and appeared to attach himself to them. Courtesy permitted him to hold his title of Náib, and he was considered, next to the sirdárs, the man first in rank at Kândahár. Now that the Shikárpúr expedition was projected, and he was to remain in charge of the city, it is asserted, that he wrote to Kámrân, offering to make it over to him. His messenger was seized near Gríshk, and the náib, unconscious that his intended treachery had been exposed, attended the darbár as usual, and was made prisoner by Fúr Dil Khân. The caution and fears manifested on this occasion by the sirdárs were very great. The náib was detained throughout the day in the house of Fúr Dil Khân, and by night he was privately removed, in a palanquin, to the citadel, where a part of the house of Kohan Dil Khân was set aside as his prison. The custody of his person was intrusted to Hindústání soldiers, it being apprehended that the sympathy of Afghâns

might be excited, or that they might be seduced. The gates of the city were closed, and strictly guarded; all was on the alert, it being thought probable that the numerous friends and adherents of the captive chief might attempt his rescue. Bodies of troops were instantly despatched into those parts of the country inhabited by his úlús, or tribe, to prevent insurrection,—a necessary step, as the sons of Gúl Máhomed Khân had escaped from Kândahár.

I left the Náib in prison; and the expedition to Shikárpúr was deferred, as it proved, never to take place. He was eventually released, and suffered to proceed to Pesháwer, where he was connected, by marriage, with the Sirdár Yár Máhomed Khân, who would not, so strange is Afghân custom, the less courteously receive him on account of his meditated treason to his Kândahár brother. It is due to Gúl Máhomed Khân to state, that some persons at Kândahár, in common with the whole of his friends, maintained that the story of his correspondence with Kámrân was a fiction, invented by the sirdárs to excuse the seizure of his wealth, and his degradation, he being obnoxious to them as a chief of the *ancien régime*. The Náib died at Pesháwer. Some years afterwards, being there when it was occupied by the Síkh Sirdár Harí Sing, I fell in with one of his sons, who was unsound in mind, and accustomed to muse, and stand bareheaded in the sun. When he re-

tired with the sirdárs I occupied the house in which he had lived, and in the sard khâna, or under-ground chamber, belonging to it, the earth was dug up, no doubt on account of treasure having been buried there. He went to Kâbal, but did not live long.

The city of Kândahár is surrounded by mud walls, which have a circumference of three miles. There are, I believe, seventeen towers on each face, besides the angular ones; and a trench was carried round, under the direction of the late Sirdár Shír Dil Khân. Its situation is convenient, as it is on no side commanded; and it has five gates, one of which opening upon the íd-gâh, and leading into the citadel, is generally closed up. The citadel occupies the north-west quarter of the city, and is said to have been built by Shâhzâda Kámrân, who formerly held the government of the city and country. The present city was projected by Ahmed Shâh, the founder of the Dúrání monarchy, and on that account in all public documents is styled Ahmed Shâhí. It superseded another city, designed by Nádir Shâh, whose ruins are to be seen a little to the south-east, as that replaced the more ancient city, taken by that conqueror from the Ghiljís, and then dismantled by him. Its ruins are about two miles distant from the present city, seated at the foot, and on the acclivity of a hill, and are still considerable.

At the point where the roads from the principal

gates intersect each other is a covered building, called the Chahár Sú, whose lower apartments are occupied by traders, and the upper ones are called the Nobat Khâna, from the Nobat being daily performed there. The principal bazars are wide and spacious, and had originally avenues of trees, and canals, leading along either side of them, but they are not now well preserved. No city can be better supplied with water, which is brought by large canals from the Arghassân river, and then distributed by so many minor ones, that there is perhaps no house which has not one of them passing through its yard. There are also many wells, and the water is considered preferable to that of the canals as a beverage.

Of the area included within the city walls so much is spread over with ruinous and deserted houses, extensive courts, gardens, and ranges of stabling, that it is probable there are not above five thousand inhabited houses, by which estimate the population would be from twenty-five to thirty thousand souls. Notwithstanding the city is acknowledged to be the takht, or metropolis of the Dúránís, the public mosques, and other buildings, are by no means handsome, arising principally, perhaps, from a deficiency of materials; and this evil has been detrimental to the substantial erection of the city generally, the houses being almost universally built of unburnt bricks, and covered with

domes, there being no fuel to burn bricks, and no timber to make flat roofs.

Ahmed Shâh was consistently interred in the city of his creation, and his tomb is one of its most interesting objects. It stands in an enclosure surrounded with apartments, and lines of mulberry trees. Of octagonal form, it is surmounted with a cupola, and is farther embellished with minarets. In the central chamber of the interior is the king's tomb, of white marble, covered with rich carpets. The ceiling is gorgeously gilded, and painted with lapis lazuli, and at the top is suspended a brazen or gilded globe, supposed by popular belief to have been closed by the sovereign before his death, and to contain his soul.

The residences of the sirdárs, while large and sufficiently commodious, display no architectural taste or beauty; the balconies of their bálla khánas, or upper rooms, are, indeed, curiously carved in wood, and constitute their chief ornamental appendages. The arg, or citadel, being constructed of kiln-burnt bricks, appears to advantage from the exterior, and the entrance is somewhat imposing. Within, the palaces of the former kings, with their painted chambers, are desolate, or occupied by the menials of the present rulers, who seem studiously to avoid residing in them.

The bazars are well supplied with good and cheap provisions, and with a great abundance of

excellent fruits. Kâbal is famed for the quantity, Kândahár for the quality, of its fruits; yet I found them so reasonable that a maund, or several English pounds of grapes, was purchased for a pais; and figs, plums, apricots, peaches, pears, melons, and almonds, were nearly as cheap. The pomegranates of Kândahár are, perhaps, unsurpassed, and justly enjoy a great repute in these countries. Meat, while very good, is not perhaps so cheap as at Kâbal, but roghan, so generally used, and bread, are cheaper, as are curds and eggs; of the latter ten or twelve being sold for one pais. It is a great blessing to these countries that subsistence is so cheap, and that the poorer classes are, consequently, little affected by the struggles for political ascendancy amongst the chiefs. Fuel is one of the articles considered dear, and is brought from a distance. In the neighbourhood of Kândahár are some objects worthy of notice, such as the Ghârí-Jemshíd, or the cavern of Jemshíd; what is called the petrified city; and the Zíárat, or shrine of Bábá Wallí; and more distant, the Zíárat of Shâh Makhsúd, which annually draws numerous visitors from the surrounding country. The valley of the Arghassân river is also a delightful locality, from its verdant meadows, its villages, and orchards.

The provinces of Kândahár are administered by four sirdárs, brothers, viz. Fúr Dil Khân, Kohan Dil Khân, Rahám Dil Khân, and Meher Dil Khân. There was, originally, another brother, and joint

sirdár, Shír Dil Khân, who died a year or two before I visited the country.

They are all sons of Sarfaráz, or Pâhíndah Khân, and by the same mother. I have just related the manner in which they acquired Kândahár, which happened about the time when Kámrân's son, Jehângír, was expelled from Kâbal; and they have since been allowed to retain the territory, which was won, as it is said, by their own swords. Their deceased brother, Shír Dil Khân, was a brave soldier, and had distinguished himself on many occasions, in the war carried on by his half-brother, the famous Vazír Fatí Khân, against the Persians; then in an attempt to take possession of Herát; and finally, at Kâbal, where an unprecedented series of intrigues and perfidies was terminated by the spoliation of Habíb Ulah Khân, with whose treasures the sirdár returned to Kândahár, and died soon afterwards.

As the present sirdárs occupy what is acknowledged the takht, or metropolis of the Dúránís, the elder brother, Fúr Dil Khân, in his communications with foreign states, assumes the title and tone of Pádshâh; and seems, moreover, to be inclined to support his pretensions by force of arms. He affects a control, or perhaps, rather, supremacy over his brothers established elsewhere, which they verbally admit. This sirdár is prudent and cautious, and more capable of calculating soundly than any of his family. He is remark-

able as being the only prince, (I mean native,) I believe I may say throughout Asia, that pays his soldiers regularly. The stipendiary in his service invariably receives his allowance monthly. His brothers do not profit by the example.

When I was at Kândahár he made a rigid reform in his military establishment, and purged it of all inefficient hands. The sirdár is guilty of extravagant oppression, and taxation is pushed as far as possible, or as the patience of the subject can endure. The people, after giving him credit for punctuality, and a regard to truth, heartily execrate him, and pronounce him to be "bissíár sakht," or very hard. His nephew, the son of Taimúr Kúli Khân, one day lamenting the condition of Kândahár, and describing its advantages of situation and fertility, ascribed all the misery existing to the tyranny and incapacity of the rulers. When I would ask a Dúrání, what could induce a man of sense, as Fúr Dil Khân had the reputation of being, to be so intent upon extortion and the impoverishment of the country, the reply was, that being aware he was an usurper, and uncertain how long he might continue in power, he was amassing as much treasure as he could, while the opportunity was afforded him—as was the case with all the Bárak Zais.

The sirdár, like most of his family, has passed an active and eventful life. On the seizure of his brother, the Vazír Fatí Khân, at Herát, he

was made a prisoner by Kámrân, who subsequently released him, and appointed him mír, or principal of his tribe. He fled from Herát, urged thereto by the reproaches of his blinded and degraded brother, and at Andálí, a castle near Gríshk, organized the opposition which eventually gained Kândahár. On the death of the Sirdár Máhomed Azem Khân at Kâbal, he marched there, and confirming the son of the defunct Habíb Ulah Khân in authority, seized the person of Ayúb Shâh, the mock king of his late brother's creation, and terminated the farce, for such it had become, of Sadú Zai rule.

Of the others, Kohan Dil Khân is most esteemed, being reputed the most warlike of them, and to have, besides, a little generosity and manliness in his composition. The two others are of less consequence, and I never heard any one speak very favourably of them. Meher Dil Khân, indeed, while his other brothers are, or profess themselves to be, rigid Súnís in religion, and therefore use little scruple in their dealings with the Pársíwâns, or Shías of the country—affects a liberality on the score of faith, and pretends to sympathise with all who are ill-treated on that account; he is, therefore, more popular than his brothers with the Shía population, which is not inconsiderable. He is, however, suspected to be in this, and on other points, a "thag," or hypocrite; and his talent for dissimulation and deceit has been evinced on many

occasions, particularly when, at Kâbal, he was the agent in deluding and making prisoner his nephew, Habíb Ulah Khân, preparatory to the appropriation of his wealth, by the late Shír Dil Khân. All the Sirdárs of Kândahár are educated men, and Meher Dil Khân is even literary, and a poet, writing verses, you will be told, faster than other men can write prose.

When I arrived at Kândahár the sirdárs were at variance; and there were two distinct darbárs. Fúr Dil Khân held his alone, while the others assembled at the house of Kohan Dil Khân in the arg, or citadel; the latter considered it necessary to unite against their elder brother, to whom they never went, or paid any kind of obedience. At length a reconciliation was effected, the three brothers first paying a visit to Fúr Dil Khân, who afterwards returned them the compliment. The result of the renewal of intercourse was, that Khodâ Nazzar, an Andar Ghiljí, known familiarly by the name of Mámah, or uncle, (which he had been effectively to Shír Dil Khân), was appointed Múkhtahár, or chief manager of affairs. The first measures of this minister were popular; but he has since, justly or unjustly, acquired the reputation of being a "shaitân," or devil.

The city of Kândahár is regularly built, the bazar being formed by two lines, drawn from opposite directions, and intersecting in the centre of the place. It is consequently composed of four

distinct quarters, over each of which one of the sirdárs exercises authority. While residing within the citadel, near Kohan Dil Khân's residence, I had an opportunity of seeing the daily visitors as they passed to the darbár of the three confederate brothers. Amongst the unwilling ones were invariably from fifty to one hundred Hindús, some of them, no doubt, men of respectability, and all merchants or traders, who had been seized in their houses or shops, and dragged along the streets to the darbár, the sirdárs needing money, and calling upon them to furnish it. This was a daily occurrence; and it was certainly afflicting to behold men of decent appearance driven through the bazar by the hirelings of these Dúrání despots, who wished to negotiate a loan. Yet I have seen the Hindús of this city on occasions of festivals, assembled in gardens, with every sign of riches in their apparel and trinkets; nor did they appear less gay than they would have been in a Hindú kingdom. The gains of these men must be enormous, or they never could meet the exactions of their rulers; and without extravagant profits, operating as an offset, they never could submit so patiently to the indignities heaped upon them in every Músulmân country, from the prince to the lowest miscreant who repeats his kalmah.

I am unable to state the amount of revenue possessed by these sirdárs individually. I have heard twelve lákhs of rupees mentioned as the

probable sum of the gross revenue of the country, which may be thought sufficient, looking at the deterioration everywhere prevalent, and the obstacles thrown in the way of trade. Of this sum the larger proportion will be taken by Fúr Dil Khân, who is also in possession of large treasures, acquired on the demise of his brother Shír Dil Khân, of which he deprived his heirs.*

Neither can I assign to each brother the share he holds in the division of the country, or only in a general manner. Kohan Dil Khân has charge of the western frontier, important as being that of Herát; he has also authority over Zemín Dáwer, and the districts of the Garm Sél. This sirdár collects the tribute from the Házára tribes dependent on Kândahár, and, it may be, from the Núr Zai country of Daráwat, bordering on the Helmand. Rahám Dil Khân draws revenue from some of the country to the east, neighbouring on the independent Ghiljís, and from Shorárawak, Peshing, and Síwí—the latter north-east of Dádar and Kachi. Meher Dil Khân enjoys the country to the north-east of Kândahár, which also touches upon the Ghiljí lands, besides various portions in other parts. Fúr Dil Khân reserves to himself the fertile districts in the vicinity of the city, where the revenue is at once productive, and collected with facility. In the distant provinces troops are not generally stationed, but are required to be annually sent, as tribute is mostly paid only after intimidation. The authority of

Kândahár is acknowledged over a considerable space of country, and the Khâka tribes of Toba, with the Teríns, and other rude tribes in that part, confess a kind of allegiance, allowing no claim on them, however, but that of military service, which is also rendered to the sirdárs by Khân Terik, the chief of the Ghiljí tribe of Terekí. The present chief of Balochistân, Mehráb Khân of Kalât, was, after I left Kândahár, compelled to pay a tribute, I believe of one lákh of rupees, Kalât base coin, equal to about four thousand rupees of Kândahár currency, and to engage to furnish a quota of troops, and otherwise to assist in the furtherance of Fúr Dil Khân's projects against Sind. A proper understanding with this chief was very necessary, even essential, as the success of an expedition to the south would greatly depend upon his friendship or enmity, it being unavoidable that the army should march one hundred and fifty cosses through his territories. The capture of Shikárpúr would lead to a collision with the rulers of Sind, who, although they might assemble numerous troops, would be little dreaded by the Dúránís.

In 1827 the power of Kâbal attracted the attention and excited the apprehensions of the Sirdárs of Kândahár; and Rahám Dil Khân started on a mission to Pesháwer. He proceeded to Marúf, a fortress belonging to the family, and thence took the route, followed by the Loháni kâfílas through the Vazírí hills to Ták, Dost Máhomed Khân

making a vain attempt to pick him up on the road. He had with him five hundred, or, as some say, eight hundred horse, and extorted money and necessaries from every unfortunate chief he met with. He encamped near the town, and demanded a large sum of money from the surly and wealthy Sirwar Khân, who, however, considering that his walls were high and thick, and that he had guns with which his Kândahár guest was unprovided, absolutely refused; and the baffled sirdár was compelled to decamp, and make the best of his way to Peshâwer. There a circumstance occurred, which although not bearing on the immediate subject, may be mentioned as descriptive of the manners of the times. Ranjit Singh hearing of Rahám Dil Khân's visit, and that he had a valuable sword, immediately sent his compliments, and expressed a desire that the sword should be sent to Lahore. The pride of the Duráni sirdár must certainly have been mortified, but fearing the consequences of refusing compliance to the polite request to himself, or to his brothers at Pesháwer, he forwarded it. Ranjit Singh, of course, accepted the present, as a péshkash, or tributary offering, and must have chuckled at the helpless condition to which the once terrific race had become reduced.

Rahám Dil Khân returned to Kândahár, accompanied by Yár Máhomed Khân, the elder of the Pesháwer Sirdárs, and his half-brother. Matters were soon settled, and it was agreed to humble Dost

Máhomed Khân. For this object he was to be attacked from the east and from the west. In pursuance of the arrangements, Pír Máhomed Khân, the younger of the Pesháwer Sirdárs, expelled the sons of the Nawâb Samad Khân from the districts of Kohât and Hângú; but the famous Saiyad Ahmed Shâh, assisted by Báram Khân and Júma Khân, Khalíl arbabs, or chiefs, and instigated, no doubt, by Dost Máhomed Khân, by keeping Pesháwer in continual alarm, reduced the sirdárs to the necessity of defending their own territory, and prevented them from marching on Jelálabád and Kâbal, as had been concerted. I have narrated, in the narrative of my journey from Ták to Pesháwer, the circumstance of my falling in with Pír Máhomed Khân between Kohât and Hângú. I have also shown how the activity of Saiyad Ahmed Shâh,—too late, indeed, to prevent the conquest of those places,—compelled the sirdár to march precipitately from Kohât to Pesháwer. During my stay at Pesháwer the Saiyad did not relax his efforts, and, by sallies on Hashtnaggar, allowed the sirdárs no respite from anxiety. Subsequently, when I had found my way as far as Ghazní, I found Dost Máhomed Khân encamped, with six thousand men; and the army of Kândahár, stated at eleven thousand men, was about seven cosses in front. A battle was daily expected by the men, but I doubt whether intended by the leaders. Vakíls, or envoys, were, in the first instance, despatched by Dost Má-

homed Khân, who, the best officer in the country, is prudent enough to gain his ends by fair words rather than by violence. These vakíls demanded the reasons of the hostile array; asked if the Bárak Zais were not Mússúlmâns and brethren, and whether it would not be better to unite their arms against the Síkhs, than ingloriously employ them in combating Dúránís against each other. They, moreover, submitted, that Dost Máhomed Khân was perfectly aware of the right of primogeniture of his brother Fúr Dil Khân, and that he occupied the takht, or capital. The Kândahár Sirdárs claimed the surrender of half Kâbal, and the whole of Loghar and Shilgar, as a provision for the young son of their late brother, Shír Dil Khân. The negotiations were so adroitly conducted by Dost Máhomed Khân and his friends, that a treaty was concluded, by which he lost not an inch of ground, but agreed to make an annual remittance to Kândahár of the amount of revenue of Loghar, valued at forty thousand rupees, for the son of Shír Dil Khân; as it afterwards proved, never intending to send it. He moreover expressed his willingness to coöperate in Fúr Dil Khân's projected expedition to Sind, alike without meaning to fulfil his engagement.

The troops of Dost Máhomed Khân, although inferior in number, being choice men, were sanguine of success, and at least possessed confidence, a presage of victory. It was expected, however, in the

event of an engagement, that the greater part of the Kândahár army would have gone over to the highly popular Sirdár of Kabal, who is called the "dostdár sipáhân," or the soldier's friend.

The Kândahár troops hastily retired, and Yár Máhomed Khân, who had accompanied them to Ghazní, quietly passed on to Pesháwer. The sirdárs of that place had, however, benefited by the operations, as they had possessed themselves of Kohât and Hângú. These they were allowed, by treaty, to retain, as an equivalent for a claim of one lákh of rupees from the revenue of Kabâl, which Dost Máhomed Khân had agreed to pay to Súltân Máhomed Khân, to get him out of the country, but which he had forgotten to do as soon as his object was gained. The Nawâb Samad Khân was carried off about this time by cholera, and his two sons, neglected by Dost Máhomed Khân, were provided with jághírs in the province of Jelálabád, by the Nawâb Máhomed Zemân Khân.

As soon as Dost Mâhomed Khân was relieved of the presence of his Kândahár brothers, he moved into the country of Zúrmat, inhabited by the Ghiljí tribe of Súlímân Khél, very numerous and powerful, and who had not hitherto been reduced to the condition of subjects. Hâjí Khân boasted of having urged this measure, the sirdár being unwilling to disturb the Ghiljís. A vast number of castles were destroyed, and much spoil made, while the annual amount of tribute to be paid in future was fixed.

The lands of Khân Terik, a vassal or ally of Kândahár, were also ravaged; and although the news thereof excited some indignation in the breast of the sirdárs, they did not interest themselves to protect their suffering friend; and I venture to think that Khân Terik, conscious they could not, or would not afford aid, never thought of soliciting it.

The revenue of the Kândahár Sirdárs I have already stated at about twelve lakhs of rupees; and it has been seen that they had assembled a force computed at eleven thousand men; but on this occasion they had not only drawn out the íljárí, or militia of the country, but had assembled all their allies and dependents. It is not supposed that the sirdárs regularly entertain above four thousand men, of whom three thousand are cavalry, and considered good; but, as if suspicious of their own Dúránís, they are generally Ghiljís; to whom the sirdárs may also have a predilection on account of their mother being of that tribe. Kândahár contains, in its fertility and its resources, all the elements of a powerful state, and could provide a large military force, but neither the funds nor the popularity of the present chiefs will allow them to profit by the advantages. The artillery, of twenty pieces, is equally divided between the four brothers. Some of them are unserviceable, and amongst the better ones are two or three Dutch guns, which they correctly distinguish by the name Hâlandéz.

The Sirdárs of Kândahár affect no kind of pomp,

and even Fúr Dil Khân is content, amongst his own kawânins, or chiefs, with the simple appellation of Sirdár. On the whole, they are decidedly detested, and a change is ardently desired by their people, who are sadly oppressed, while one of the fairest provinces of Khorasân is daily accelerating in deterioration.

I had intended to have passed the winter at Herát, and would, with that view, have accompanied Máhomed Sídik Khân to Gríshk, which lay on my road, but his departure seemed indefinitely delayed, and my Patán companion was averse to undertake the journey alone, being terrified by the accounts he heard of the Tokí plunderers of Sístân, who infest the desert between Gríshk and Farra, and of the Allamâns, who carry off parties between Farra and Herát. He reasonably urged, that if Afghâns were to be encountered, he might hope to pass through them, but that with Baloches and Túrkomâns he had little chance; while he had no wish to be consigned to slavery. It chanced that Attá Máhomed Khân, called the Khor, or blind, arrived from Kâbal *en route* to Mecca, and my Patán was anxious that I should have joined him, as he was proceeding towards Sind, but as I declined to do so, he asked me to consent to his availing himself of so favourable an opportunity of visiting the sacred place; which, of course, I readily did.

I adhered to my intention of proceeding to Herát, and started alone from Kândahár, hoping to gain

Gríshk, and there to await companions. I passed about twelve miles on the road, but found it impossible to proceed, being interrupted by every person I met, and I returned, having lost every little article I carried with me. Subsequently, a lucky accident prevented my joining a small kâfila, whose destination was Farra, as it was attacked and plundered on the road by the Allamâns. Winter had now fairly set in, and finding I had no chance of reaching Herát, the only alternative open to me was to move towards Shikárpúr, while the season permitted the transit of kâfílas. On inquiry, it proved that one of these was about to start in a day or two, and, as a preparatory measure, was already encamped without the Shikárpúr gate. A young man belonging to it promised to inform me when it was ready to march, and confiding that he would do so, I remained at the house of Sirfaráz Khân, expecting his summons.

My Kândahár friends had been anxious to have enabled me to pass comfortably through the journey, but I refused to profit by their offers to the extent they wished; still, I had accepted a small sum of money, which was urged upon me in so kind a manner that had I declined it I might have offended.

CHAPTER XV.

Dreary country.—Serâi.—Quest of road.—Wild Patán.—Gain road.—Signs of the kâfila.— Tents. — Invitation.—Repast.— Treatment after repast.—Despoiled.—Provided with lodging.— Reviled for an infidel.—Renewed ill-treatment.—Mutual ignorance.—Dismissal.—Forced return.—Interposition of Múlla.— Rebuke of my persecutors.—Exposure of my money.—Restitution of my property.—Demand for my money.—Fresh encounter.—Lose part of my money.—In danger of a scuffle.— Join camel-drivers.—Despoiled.—Appearance of Hâjís.—Accompany them.—Desperate situation.—Meetings.—Mirth of Afghâns. —Plain of Robât.—Houz Maddat Khân.—Tents of Robât.— Hâjís.—Their mode of travelling, &c.—Reach the kâfila.—Repulsed by Khâdar Khân.—Intensity of cold.—Rejected from fires. —Received by Máhomed Alí.—Khâdar Khân.—Abdúlah Khân. —Individuals of Kâfila.—Join two youths begging.—Assailed by dogs.—Distress at night.—Receive a postín.—Afflictions—Their continuance.—Progress of kâfila.—Nature of country.—Búldak. —Pastoral tribes.—Liberties taken by men of kâfila.—Omit no occasion of plunder.—Dog purloined.—Hill range.—At loss for water.—Fruitless parley with Atchak Zais.—Ascent of hills.— Descent. — Pass of Kozhak.—Other passes.— Interruption by Atchak Zais.—Their audacity.—Kílla Abdúlah Khân.—River. —Halt.—Violence of the Atchak Zais.—Difficulty in arrangement.—Khâdar Khân's agitation.—Eloquent debates.—Outrageous behaviour.—River Lora.—Ali Zai.—Mehráb Khân's country.—Approach Shâll.—Personate a Hâjí.—Reach Shâll.—Situation in the kâfila.—Stay at Shâll.—Good treatment.—Quetta. —Bazar— Gardens.— Valley.—Climate.—Fear of Khâkas.— Khaddít.—Villages.—Tribes.

I PROCEEDED alone from Kândahár, with the intention of overtaking the kâfila, which had left two

days before, in progress to Shikárpúr. Although perfectly aware of the danger of travelling in these countries, particularly for a stranger, and understanding that the káfila would march slowly, being burthened with women and children, and judging the danger would not be excessive within two or three days from the capital, I had every expectation of reaching it the second march.

Arriving at the last of the villages in the neighbourhood of the city, I entered it with a view of procuring food, but could prevail on no one to prepare it. At a short distance from the village I observed a black tent, which, I presumed, was occupied by a pastoral family, and, they being more hospitable than the fixed inhabitants, I repaired to it, and found people who could not speak Persian, and I being ignorant of Pashto, we were mutually at a loss. I succeeded in conveying the information that "doudí," or bread, was required, and that they should be paid for it. To this they agreed; and while the wife was kneading the dough the husband's attention was attracted by the sight of a drinking vessel, which I had purchased at Kândahár, and he took, or rather seized it, returning me the few pais I had previously given him. Nor did he stay here, but absolutely searched me; and my coin, which I had bound in the webcord of my perjámas, underwent his inspection; the vicinity of the village alone deterred him from making it booty. Bread was at length served. While eating it, I could

comprehend the discourse of the family related to me, and I heard the word kâfila pronounced several times, which encouraged me to hope it was near at hand. Having smoked the chillam, as is invariably the custom in these countries after meals, I took leave of my host, inquiring, by signs, the direction of the high road to Shikárpúr. He understood me, and directed my sight to a whitish-topped peak among the distant hills, under which, he asserted, the road winded.

Having yet two or three hours of daylight, I dashed across the country between me and the hills — without a sign of habitation, — and came upon a large swamp of briny water, which I had some difficulty in clearing. At length I reached a large solitary building, uninhabited and in decay, which had probably been formerly a serai: here were two or three chambers, in decent preservation, in one of which I took up my quarters for the night, although the doing so was not unattended with danger, as, from the remains of recent fires, it was evident the place was frequented; and I inferred, that in so sequestered a spot, and distant from any path or road, it might be the resort of robbers, or other doubtful characters. Recommending myself to Divine protection, I resigned myself to sleep, and awoke in the morning, having had no other companions than pigeons, whose numerous nests covered the vaulted roofs of the buildings, and no other visitants

than a few owls, that, with their large flapping wings and discordant cries, occasionally broke in upon my repose.

Started, and nearing the hills, observed the village called Káréz Hájí. The city is not visible from hence, a small detached line of eminences, Koh Zákkar, intervening. Reached a kárez without water, and made for a building, which I found to be a deserted flour-mill. I could not discover the road I was in quest of, but concluded I should gain it by following the line of sand hills, which now appeared on the right; towards which I accordingly shaped my course. Approaching them, a horseman, one of the wild Patáns, in the uncouth garments of his tribe, galloped from them. He rode towards me, and, I believe, asked me the road to some place or other, but as I was unable either to understand him, or to return an answer, his vociferations were to no effect, and, applying to me all the curses and abusive epithets his language furnished, he left me, and galloped off, to my great satisfaction. I now descried in the distance a string of camels, which were, without doubt, pacing the desired road, and I hoped might be the kâfila I was seeking. Gained a road, in which were abundant prints of the feet of men, horses, and camels. There was no person in sight that I could ask if the road was the one for Shikárpúr; however, I entered it without hesitation, and proceeded five

or six cosses without meeting or seeing any one. To the right and left were hills: to the right of sand, to the left of black rock, slightly covered with soil. The road, in fact, described the line where the sand desert connected with the clear country. There was no vestige of inhabitants. Found the camels I had seen to be returning from Kândahár, whither they had conveyed wood from Robát. This mortified me for the moment, as it left me dubious as to the road, but on passing the return camels, which had halted, I again perceived the traces of men, horses and camels, as before, and the rinds of pomegranates, which had manifestly been that day only thrown on the ground. This encouraged me to hope the kâfila was very near. Arrived at a kárez, to the right of the road: the water of bad quality, and unpalatable, though clear and transparent. Continued marching, with still the same signs of the caravan, when the shades of evening began to obscure the horizon. At the distance of a quarter of a mile from the road, I observed two or three trees, which, with the circumstance of the kárez before mentioned, winding in the same direction, indicated the presence of some village. Found about one hundred and twenty tents, arranged in a semi-circular form; in front of which were two spots, enclosed by stones, which served as masjíts. It being the time of evening prayer, I went up to one of these, and saluted with the usual Sa-

lám Alíkam, and was invited to sit down. When prayers were finished one of the men, decently apparelled, said to me "Doudí kourí, dil ter rází," which signifies, "if you will eat bread, come here." I accepted the invitation, and accompanied him to his tent, which was well furnished, after the fashion of the country; and before the entrance were picketted three tolerable horses. The whole had an appearance of easy circumstances, indeed of comparative opulence. Bread was cooked expressly for me, water was brought to wash my hands before eating, and I was encouraged to eat heartily. I felt perfectly at ease, and was doing justice to my entertainment, having fasted throughout the day, when another man came in, and seated himself by my side. The repast being finished, the new visitant applied a rather rude slap on my cheek; at which I merely smiled, presuming it was intended as a joke, and although a severe one, yet, as these savages understand little of decency, and being alone among many, it was but common prudence to pass it off lightly. He then asked me for my upper garment. This I refused, still thinking him disposed to be merry. I however, found, to my cost, he was not trifling, for he despoiled me of it by pure force, as well as of my head-dress, &c; in short, left me nothing but my perjámas and shoes. He also applied two or three additional slaps on the cheek, and a liberal allowance of terms of abuse in Persian, which was

all he knew of that language. This he did in ridicule of my ignorance of Pashto, which he was continually urging me to speak. During this time my worthy host, the master of the tent, encouraged and abetted my despoiler, and received some pais which were in a pocket of my upper garment. The clothes were detained by the other ruffian, who, after a while, conducted me to his tent, one much smaller, and of mean appearance. He bade me sit down by the fire and warm myself, and in due time spread felts on the ground by the fire-side, which were to serve me for a bed, and informed me I might repose myself; cautioning me, as I understood him, not to attempt to escape during the night, for I should be certainly seized by the dogs. I stretched myself on my sorrowful bed, and ruminated on my deplorable situation, consoling myself, however, that it did not appear the intention of my friend to despoil me of my perjámas, in the webcord of which, I have before stated, was my small stock of money; and calculating on certainly reaching the kâfila the next day, if allowed to depart in the morning, and if I should be able to repair my deficiency of raiment. Still my situation was sufficiently wretched; yet, from the fatigue of the day's march, the power of a naturally strong constitution, and the presence of the fire, I shortly fell asleep, and enjoyed uninterrupted repose during the night, awaking only in the morning when kicked by my host, who called me a kâfr, or infidel,

for not rising to say prayers, which he presently repeated on the very clothes of which he had despoiled me the preceding evening. I was now led into the tent in which I had been originally entertained, where several other men were assembled. Here I was beat with sticks and cords, and had some large stones thrown at me. I made no doubt but it was intended to destroy me; I therefore collected my spirits, and resolved to meet my fate with firmness, and betray no marks of weakness or dejection. Thanks to heaven, it was ordered otherwise. I was asked if I was an Uzbek, an Hazára, or Baloch. The latter question was many times repeated, but I persisted in the negative, being conscious that the Baloch tribes were the enemies of these men, (the Núr Zais,) and I asserted that I was from Kach Mekrân, they not having the least notion of an European. This answer might have proved unfortunate, for I have since learned that Mekrân is a component part of Balochistân; but the geographical knowledge of these savages was no better than my own, and they stumbled over the words Kach Mekrân, without being able to divine what country it could be. At length, the sun being considerably elevated, they dismissed me in the state of nakedness to which they had reduced me, telling me, "Dággar lár-dí warza," or, to "take that road." I walked about thirty paces, a few stones being complacently thrown after me, when I was hailed by a man to

return, and eat bread before I went. I was compelled reluctantly to retrace my steps, as a refusal might have involved my destruction, and I again came in contact with the ruffians. Instead of giving me bread, they renewed their consultations concerning me; and I gathered from their discourse that it was in question to bind me, and reduce me to slavery. My case now assumed a serious aspect; yet I was not wholly depressed, as I reflected, that the road to Kândahár was large and well defined, and that any night would take me to the Dúrání villages, where I knew they would not dare to follow me. It happened, however, that I was now observed by two or three aged venerable looking men, who were standing before the entrance of the tent, on the extreme left of the semicircle, which was larger than any of the others, and had before it a spear fixed in the ground, the symbol, I presumed, of authority. They beckoned to me, and I went to them, followed by the men who had so ill-treated me, and many others. A question was put to one of these aged men, who, I found, was the múlla, or priest, if it was not lawful, according to the Korân, to detain me as a slave, the singular reason being alleged, that they had performed the rites of hospitality towards me the night before.

The múlla instantly replied, that it was neither just nor lawful, nor according to the Korân, but decidedly to the contrary. Perceiving the múlla to be a man of some conscience, I asked him if he

understood Persian; on his replying, a little, I related to him how I had been treated. He expressed the greatest regret, and, severely rebuking the offenders, urged them to restore my effects. This they were unwilling to do, and much debate ensued; in which, being supported by the múlla, I took a part, and ventured to talk loudly. To one of my questions to the man who had the most ill-treated me, and struck me on the cheek, if he was a Mússulmân, he replied, "Bishák Mússumân," or, that he was one in every respect. As if my misfortunes were never to cease, my money, which until now had escaped observation, was seized by one of the men, who asked what I had concealed there. The múlla desired him to desist, saying, "Oh! merely a few onions, or something of that kind;" but the fellow wrenched out the webcord from my perjámas, and, with eyes glittering with delight, unrolled the little money I had. The múlla assumed a stern authorative tone, as did the other inmates of the tent; he seized the robber by his arm, and ordered him to restore the money, and other property. His orders were obeyed, and everything was restored.

After receiving the múlla's benediction, I made for the high road. I might have proceeded one hundred yards, when a man came running after me, and, sword in hand, demanded my money. Observing two young men approaching with matchlocks, notwithstanding his menaces, I refused to deliver

it until their arrival. They fortunately understood a little Persian; and asserting that I was a stranger, prevailed on the robber to depart. I asked them where they were going, in the hopes of finding companions; they replied, fowling. Gaining the high road, I proceeded, rather depressed in mind, as I could not conceive that the ruffians would suffer me to depart unmolested, after having had a sight of money; and I walked along with the almost certainty of being followed. For a considerable distance I fell in with no one, until I arrived at a spot where the road branched off in two directions, where was also a grave, newly prepared, and over which were seated fifteen or twenty men. I would have avoided their observation, but they discovered and hailed me, asking if I had any snuff or tobacco. I replied in the negative. One of them came, and taking me by the arm, led me to the grave, where I had to submit to a variety of questions, but was finally dismissed without receiving any injury. The road here gradually ascends for a short distance, and then again descends. It is the point where the roads from Quetta and Shoráwak meet. I had gained the descent, when one of the men, without doubt an inhabitant of the village—to which probably his fellows belonged—came after me, and asked for my money. As he was alone, and had no other weapons than stones, I might have resisted him, but fearing the other men would come to his assistance, I produced the money; and representing,

as well as I could, that the Shikárpúr road was long, and that food was requisite, I succeeded in preserving the half of it. Chancing to use some expressions in which the word Músulmân occurred, he took offence, and seizing my neck, was about to proceed to acts of violence. I also prepared for defence, deeming it as well to die fighting as passive before such a wretch, when some camels appeared on the top of the ascent, with four or five attendants.

He now loosed his hold, as I did mine, and was about to depart, when I informed the camel-drivers of the robbery; at which they merely smiled. Seeing it, he returned, and was willing to renew hostilities. It being an object with me to accompany the camels, which were going my road, and still having some money and clothing, I used my endeavours to pacify him, which, with some ado, was accomplished.

While a stone is within reach the Patáns of these countries are never at a loss for offensive weapons. I have seen severe wounds inflicted by these missiles. They assert that Cain killed Abel with stones, which appears to have established a precedent for their use.

One of the camel-drivers told me to mount a camel, but I could not catch one. I learned they were proceeding to Robát. They were those I had passed the day before. We marched four or five koss, when they halted, and told me that in

the evening they should go to Robát. I would have continued my journey, but, alas! I was to encounter robbery anew. My clothing and money were now taken, and I was entirely stripped. In return for my perjámas they gave me a ragged pair, which did not cover my knees; my shoes alone escaped, being either too large or too small for their several feet. I did not part with my money or apparel very willingly, or very peaceably; in fact, one of the ruffians unsheathed his sword, but the others forbad violence. I appealed to them as men and Músulmâns, but this only excited their laughter.

I was still arguing with them, when two men made their appearance on the road. The Robát men conversed with each other, conjecturing they might be companions of mine, and began looking at their own means of defence. They, however, felt perfectly easy, being five in number, and armed. The new comers proved to be Hâjís, a name properly belonging to such as have made a pilgrimage to Mecca, but assumed also by those who are going to the holy place, or pretend they are so. One of them had a smattering of Persian, and endeavoured, but ineffectually, to procure the return of my effects. As these men were proceeding to join the kâfila, I accompanied them, the camel-drivers much wishing to detain me, willing, as they said, to entertain me the night at Robát.

I was now destitute, a stranger in the centre of

Asia, unacquainted with the language,—which would have been most useful to me,—and from my colour exposed on all occasions to notice, inquiry, ridicule, and insult. Still I did not despair; and although I never doubted the rule of Divine Providence, yet had I done so, my preservation in so many cases of extreme danger, with the continual birth of circumstances to extenuate misery, would have removed scepticism, and carried to my mind the conviction of the existence of an omniscient and benevolent Being, who does not neglect the meanest object of his creation.

It was some consolation to find that the kâfila was not far off; and with my new companions I proceeded, without apprehension of further plunder, having nothing to be deprived of. I had, moreover, the satisfaction of inferring that any change in my circumstances must be for the better, as it could not well be for the worse. On the road we first met a horseman, who desired and received the benediction of the Hâjí. This was given, the applicant turning his back towards the Hâjí, who repeated or mumbled something, in which the words dúníah, or wealth, and Bismillah, or in the name of God, were the only ones audible. At the close the Hâjí stroked his own beard, and gave the barbarian two or three slaps on the back, which completed the blessing. The Patán salamed with much respect, and departed well satisfied. In this rencontre I passed unnoticed. A little farther on we

met two men, who came across the hills on foot, but tolerably dressed. They also received the Hájí's benediction, and discoursed a short time, inquiring news of the Baloch tribes, who, it appeared, had but a few days before scoured the country, and plundered the villages. I afforded matter of mirth to these men; and they expressed themselves much surprised at seeing a man who could not speak Pashto. The Baloches spoken of were the Tokís of Sístân, formidable marauders, under the orders of the notorious, Khân Jahán, khân of Illamdár.

Until now we had been on either side surrounded by low hills: they ceased here, and we had before us the extensive plain of Robát. There was nothing in the shape of trees, and the only objects relieving the monotony of the scene were two or three buildings in the distance, apparently the square killas, the common defensive erections of these people, and to which their skill in military architecture is hitherto confined. Before us, on the high road, whose course being straight is visible for some distance, was a building with arched roofs after the Kândahár mode, which on reaching we found to be a houz, or reservoir of rain-water. The building was substantial, and the water good. It is a work of utility, as I saw no other water between the village I left in the morning and Robát, a distance, I suppose, of fifteen or twenty miles. It is called Houz Maddat Khân, from its founder, a Dúrání sirdár, of some eminence in the reign of Taimúr Shâh. The

embers of the fires kindled by the men of the caravan, who had halted here awhile in passing, were still alive. About two or three miles farther on, we approached the assemblage of tents on the plain of Robát. They covered the plain for a large extent, and must certainly have been five or six hundred in number. My companions went to the nearest of them, with the view of procuring food and lodging for the night, and directed me to a ruined fort, where they told me I should find the kâfila.

These Hâjís, or men representing themselves as such, travel about the country, subsisting on charity; and, as ignorance begets superstition, and superstition begets dread, they are looked up to with much awe and respect by these savages, who tremble at the very name of Mecca. Their character for sanctity ensures them the best of entertainment, in return for which they give blessings, or, if able to write, scraps of paper, which contain, as their credulous clients believe, preservatives, charms, and antidotes against all disasters and diseases. In these countries, where travelling to other individuals is attended with so much danger, they proceed in perfect security. In more civilized countries, and in the towns, they are treated with less respect; and although their character for sanctity is not disputed, they are usually told that Allah, or God, will supply their wants, and are reduced to sit in the masjíts, the common resort of the destitute.

On my road to the káfila I was accosted by a

Patán, who asked if I was not a Hâjí; I said Hoh, or yes, when he uttered an exclamation relative to the wretchedness of my condition. Found the kâfil aencamped under the fort wall, and joining it, it was no easy matter to satisfy the curiosity of the several individuals composing it, but this accomplished, I became an object of neglect, and I began to fear the possibility of suffering from want among these people. I went to Khâdar Khân, the principal man in the company, and, stating my case, requested his assistance during the journey. He frankly replied, he would give me none, and farther said, I should not accompany the kâfila. Night coming on, fires were kindled, round which the individuals of the kâfila respectively grouped. Having no other clothing than the tattered perjámas of the camel-drivers, and the cold being so intense that ice was found on the water in the morning, of the thickness of, perhaps, three quarters of an inch, I suffered accordingly, and ventured to approach the fires, invitation being out of the question. I did so only to meet repulses. I was rejected from all of them: some alleging I was a Kâfr, others no reason at all. In this desperate state of affairs, I was thinking of hazarding a visit to the tents, when a poor, but humane fellow, came and led me to his bivouac. He said he was but a poor man, and lived coarsely, but that I should partake of his fare during the journey; that he had absolutely no clothing, or I should not continue naked. My new friend, named Máhomed

Alí, was one of four associates, who had two or three camels laden with pomegranates. I gladly availed myself of his offer, and returned him my acknowledgments. He kindled his fire, and seated me by it, desiring me on no account to be dejected, that God was merciful, and would provide everything needful. I now became easy as to subsistence, and considered myself as one of the kâfila, whose composition I shall here briefly describe.

The most important personage was Khâdar Khân, Bárak Zai, and son of Júma Khân, formerly hákam, or governor, of Shikárpúr, and now in the service of Walí Máhomed Laghárí, the Nawâb Vazír of Ladkhâna in Upper Sind. Júma Khân was a brother of the reigning chiefs in Kândahár, Kâbal, &c.; but whether that his descent was tainted, that he had slender ability, or that he had little ambition, he had separated himself from them. His son, Khâdar Khân, carried on trade, and trafficked largely in horses. Business had led him to Kândahár, where he had carried his women and children; he was now escorting them back. He had a number of attendants and horses, and a plentiful show of tent-equipage for the accommodation of his ladies, who on the march travelled in camel kajáwas, or panniers; his nephew, Abdúlah Khân, a fine young man of extraordinary height, accompanied them. Next in consequence, was one they termed, by way of respect, Hákamzâda, who was the báshí, or director of the kâfila, al-

though Khâdar Khân, or rather Abdúlah Khân, appeared to order the marches. There was also two or three Shikárpúr saiyads, well mounted and apparelled, and a well-fleshed jovial horseman, in the employ of the Sind chiefs: besides these, were a few poor traffickers, who drove camels, asses, &c. laden with fruits, snuff, and miscellaneous articles. Hákamzâda owned the greater part of the merchandize in the kâfila, consisting of fruit, fresh and dried, madder, and carraways.

I was seated with my new friends, when a youth, travelling without means, came, and said he would put me in the way of procuring food for the night. I paid no great attention to him, feeling easy on that score, but my companions told me to go with him. I therefore obeyed, and was provided with a formidable long pole, for what purpose I was at a loss to conjecture; the youth and another Dúrání, destitute but well dressed, being similarly armed. We then made for the tents, nearing which, my associates commenced howling Allah! Allah! Allah! and the poles, I found, were to keep the dogs at bay while the begging of bread was carried on. The appeal for charity at no one tent was ineffectual, the inmates hastening to afford their mites, many even asking if flour or bread was needed. Our begging was carried on systematically. The youth, who appeared perfect in his part, and accustomed to such scenes, going towards the entrance of the tents and stating we were Hâjís,

while I and the Dúrání, by plying our long poles, had to contend with dogs assailing us on all sides, as if conscious we were demanding the scraps which they considered their due. About thirty or forty pounds weight of bread was procured, of which I merely received as much as sufficed for the evening's meal. The cold increasing as the night advanced, I suffered much from the want of clothing; my companions, on preparing for sleep, furnished me with a quantity of wood, to enable me to keep the fire alive during the night, over which I was to sit; I did so, with my knees drawn up to my chin; nevertheless the severity of the cold was seriously felt. Towârds morning, my situation being observed by a Mogal soldier in the service of Khâdar Khân, he came and threw over my shoulders a postín, or great-coat, if I may so express myself, made of the skins of dumbas, or large-tailed sheep, the leather excellently prepared, and the fleece well preserved. They are the general winter habits of all classes in Khorasân, and are certainly warm and comfortable.

I endeavoured to rise and return thanks, when I found that, what with the heat of the fire in front, and the intensity of the cold behind, my limbs were contracted, and fixed in the cramped position in which I had been so long sitting. I now became alarmed lest I should not be able to accompany the kâfila; nor should I had it started early in the morning, as kâfilas generally

do; but this, with a view to the convenience of the women, did not march until the sun was high above the horizon. This was a fortunate circumstance, as the solar heat gradually relaxed the stiffness of my limbs, and as I became warm in walking the pain lessened. I know not whether to impute my misfortune here to the presence of the fire or to the cold. My legs and arms were covered with blotches, and at their respective joints were reduced to a state of rawness. The latter evil disappeared in a few days, but the pains in the limbs continued to distress me exceedingly for four or five months, and have not wholly left me to this day, and probably never will. The present of this postín was undoubtedly the means of my preservation, as I never should have been able to have passed another night in similar nudity; and the cold, I afterwards found, increased for the next eight or ten marches.

The marches were not of extreme length, and I contrived tolerably well to keep up with the kâfila, starting with the asses, which went on first; when, if unable to keep pace with them, I was sure of having the camels, which followed them behind, and which were always considerably in the rear. In this manner I was secure from interruption on the road by the inhabitants of the country.

We made five or six marches, over a wild and dreary country, the surface of the soil thinly che-

quered with low stunted bushes and plants; amongst which the terk, and kâhshútar, or camel-grass, were the most prominent. There were no fixed habitations, and few traces of cultivation. From the plain of Robát we entered that of Búldak, slight rises, through which an easy road led, marking their boundaries. It was, if possible, more forbidding in aspect than the former, and there was much of its extent occupied by sand hillocks.

In one of our marches we passed a body of men, women, and children, migrating with their property to some more genial climate during the winter. The men had most of them matchlocks, but, I suspect, no ammunition, as they begged flints and powder; and a small quantity of each given them, elicited many thanks. These people crossed our route. Leaden bullets with the men of this country, I believe, are generally out of the question, having seen them, in many instances, making substitutes of mud, which they mould and dry, and place in the ground, as they say, to harden. With such projectiles they contrive to kill large fowls, &c. During our progress we one day fell in with a large deposit of wheat chaff, intended as winter provender for cattle. It was opened, and all the available animals of the kâfila laden with its contents; Khâdar Khân and the kâfila báshí directing the operation, and remaining with the mounted men while it was carried on.

We here saw no inhabitants, although from this

deposit, and the existence of water at some distance to the right, it was natural to infer that there were some in the neighbourhood. I could not here help drawing a conclusion, that if these kâfilas are liable to insult and extortion among these people, they in some measure deserve it, for, in no case where plunder could be safely perpetrated, was it omitted. The sheep or goat that strayed into their track was invariably made booty, and if they met with but a few tents, they did not fail to procure flour, roghan, krút, &c. without payment, which the inmates gave, fearing worse treatment. At one of our halts, by a pond of rain-water, called Dand Ghúlai, a faquír, mounted on a small horse without saddle, came from an adjacent collection of tents, which we did not see, and demanded alms, expatiating much on the splendour of the tents, and on the wealth in the kâfila. Abdúlah Khân asked him for his blessing, and while he was receiving it some of the men were engaged in fixing a cord around the neck of a large-sized dog which accompanied the faquír, and they succeeded in purloining it without notice. At this halting place large melons were brought to the kâfila for sale. The Hâjís, as usual, when any tents were near, went into them to pass the night, procuring better entertainment there than among the men of the kâfila; indeed, throughout Khorasân, among the Dúránís, charity appears extinct, as does also, with few exceptions, the existence of any kind of social

of benevolent feeling. We at length reached a formidable range of hills, at the entrance into which it was intended to have halted, but it was discovered that there was no water in the spots where it was usually found. Khâdar Khân was much mortified, as it was evening, and it became necessary to cross the range at once, a labour he would have been glad to have reserved for the morrow. Men were, however, despatched on all sides to search for water, and one returned with a piece of ice, which he exhibited as evidence of his discovery, but the water, although near, trickled from the crevices in the heights above, and would have been useless with respect to the animals; moreover, to encamp close to it was impossible. In this dilemma, two of the Atchak Zai appeared. They stated that they were acquainted with water very near, but would not discover it unless they received grapes, raisins, snuff, tobacco, &c, in short, something of everything they supposed might be in the kâfila. Khâdar Khân strove to induce them to moderate their demands, and much time was wasted in fruitless parley. The gesticulations of the savages, had I been free from pain, would have sufficiently diverted me, as well as the stress they laid on ōbō, as they call water, with the enormity of their demands. The khán, unable to come to terms with them, gave the order to advance.

We now ascended a steep and difficult path, down which the water oozing from the rock trickled

down. There was also much ice, and many of the camels slipped; the women had previously been removed, and seated on horses. This ascent naturally involved a troublesome descent, and we had to pass another elevation, equally precipitous, before we reached the summit of the pass, from which the extensive plain of Peshing burst upon the sight. At the bottom of the pass we found ourselves at the head of a darra, had a good place to encamp in, water in fair quantity from springs near at hand, with plenty of fuel, the small wood on the adjacent hills. This pass, that of Kozhak, was the only one we had hitherto met with, and the only obstacle we had encountered on the route, which, since leaving Kândahár, had been otherwise free from natural difficulties. The mountain range over which it leads has considerable length, and while here it forms the western boundary of Peshing, lower down it marks the eastern boundary of Shoráwak. Besides the principal pass of Kozhak, there are two other well-defined and frequented ones to the south, those of Roganí and Bédh, both crossing into Shoráwak; by the first of these the Lora river winds through the range.

In the morning we continued our progress through the darra, with hills on either side, of inferior altitude. There were numerous mimosa trees, from the trunks and branches of which gum plentifully exuded; it was eaten eagerly by the men of the kâfila, but I found it bitter and un-

palatable. On arrival at a small hut, constructed of the boughs and branches of trees, two or three men rushed from it, who, under the pretence of examination with reference to duty, rifled all the packages carried by the asses, and forbad further progress until their claims were satisfied. These men refused either to give water or to disclose where it could be found, and only after receiving a quantity of tobacco, would they give fire to enable the ass drivers to smoke their chillams. Both parties were in full debate, when Khâdar Khân and the horsemen, hitherto in the rear, came up, and instantly ordered an advance, it being nonsense to hear duty talked of in such a place, and by such men. I was, in truth, surprised at the audacity of these fellows, who were nearly naked; nor could it ever have been imagined that such miserable beings were entitled to collect duties. They were without weapons, and probably calculated on the stupidity or timidity of the ass drivers, who they might also have thought were proceeding alone. During their search a Korân received the marks of their respect, being applied to the eyes and lips.

On clearing this darra, we entered the plain of Peshing; to the right, on rising ground, stood a square castle, belonging to Abdúlah Khân, Sirdár of the Atchak Zais. There were two or three mulberry-trees near it, and some cultivation of wheat, lucern, and melons. Khâdar Khân and his mount-

ed men rode up to the castle, for the purpose of arranging duty matters, and wished the whole of the kâfila to have accompanied him, but the men would not consent, fearing the rapacity of the Atchak Zai Sirdár, should they place themselves in his power. We therefore, under the orders of Abdúlah Khân, the nephew, passed on, and crossed a small river, on which was a village, the houses built of mud. We then directed our course towards another village, a circular tower in which was visible far off. There we halted; the water supplied from a pond, the river being considerably distant. Khâdar Khân joined us, and expressed anger that the kâfila had not accompanied him, as the affair of duty would have been arranged.

The men who now came from the village to claim duty were most beggarly-dressed, and without shoes. A most contentious scene occurred, their demands being exorbitant; and nothing that evening was settled. These officers of the customs stayed with us during the night, and were most oppressive visitants, admitting no refusal of anything they asked for. The next day passed also in stormy discussion, and the evening approached without any satisfactory result, when the kâfila báshí seized one by the neck, and pushed him towards the horses, telling him to count them, it appearing that the number of horses in the caravan was disputed. To count twenty, or twenty-five, actually exceeded the ruffian's numerical ability;

it was necessary to count them for him. The spirited conduct of the kâfila báshí seemed to have its effect in bringing matters to a close; money was now paid, and matters were considered settled. The men, however, did not leave us, and towards night urged fresh claims as to the asses, and they with their burthens were carried into the village for inspection. In the morning a new subject for altercation was found; and a well-dressed youth made his appearance, who wrote Persian, and officiated as scribe; nor was it until the day was considerably advanced that the kâfila was permitted to proceed, fees having been given to the scribe and others.

I could not estimate the degree of danger attending our stay here, but Khâdar Khân, who, on the score of his family, had the most at stake, was continually walking to and fro in great agitation, and frequently uttered fervent ejaculations that God would deliver him from the hands of the Atchak Zais. It would have given me pleasure, had I known Pashto, to have learned what passed during the debates at this place, for undoubtedly much eloquence was displayed on both sides. I could glean, that the Atchak Zais ridiculed the menace of forcing a passage without payment of duty, and that they asserted it was much better to have Hindús to deal with, who without parley or hesitation paid five rupees for each ass, whereas they could only procure two from a Mússulmân, and that

after much dispute. The conduct of the men, who on the plea of collecting duty fixed themselves upon the kâfila, was most outrageous and extraordinary. They insisted that food should be prepared for them, and would not allow it to be cooked, kicking over the pots with their feet, and then with their closed fists scattering the fire. It was evident they wished rather to annoy than to be well entertained, and the consequence was, they were served with meat nearly raw, which they devoured like cannibals. The two evenings we halted here, the men of the village assembled in great numbers around us (for curiosity merely), seating themselves on the ground, at a little distance. None of them had weapons, which are perhaps scarce among them. Abdúlah Khân, their sirdár, had, I was informed, a piece of ordnance, possibly a jinjâl, at his castle.

Leaving the village, our course led through a small belt of tamarisk jangal, clearing which we halted between a village and river close to it, the same, probably, we had before passed. The stream was in a deep sunken bed; and there are no wheels on its banks to make the water available for purposes of irrigation, the natives saying they have no material for ropes. The water of this river, the Lora, which loses itself in the sands of Shoráwak, is a little saline to the taste, and is esteemed ponderous.

The next day's march led us anew amongst low

hills, and over an uneven country. We halted near a rivulet, two or three villages bearing to the left, with a few trees interspersed about them. These, I believe, were inhabited by the Ali Zai Patáns, and were dependent on Shâll.* During the night robbery was commited on one of our saiyads, who suffered to the amount of one hundred rupees; his Korân, which was carried off, was afterwards returned in a mysterious manner. The thieves were not discovered, but the Ali Zai had the credit of the robbery.

The next march was cheerfully performed by the kâfila, as it removed them from the country of the Patáns, and brought them fairly into that of Mehráb Khân, the Bráhúí chief of Kalât. Here danger to the same extent did not exist; but in these semi-barbarous countries, where tyranny and misrule prevail, oppression never ceases. This day I was so absolutely exhausted, and my pains were so severe, that I was utterly unable to keep pace with the kâfila, and the camels even passed me. Leaving the rivulet a village occurred, near which the men were employed in winnowing corn; they suffered me to pass unmolested. Beyond it was a káréz of clear but badly tasted water, with a few tút, or barren mulberry-trees, on its course; and, farther on, a line of undulating eminences, preceding the large plain or valley of Shâll. Among the eminences I was compelled, from the acuteness of my sufferings, to cast myself on the earth,

and truly death, at that time, would have been hailed as friendly. With much difficulty I made my way into the plain; and in progress to the town, prominently seated on a lofty mound, and distant some three or four cosses, I replied to all I met that I was a Hâjí. It was dark before I reached it, when I learned from a soldier at the western, or Hanna gate, that the kâfila was immediately under the southern wall of the town. I passed into the bazar, where I met Gúl Máhomed, one of my companions, who conducted me to the remainder. All were glad to see me again, fearing some accident had happened to me; and I amused them by relating my adventures as a Hâjí on the road.

I may here observe, that my situation in the kâfila, as regarded attention and civility, had become very supportable. Khâdar Khân, who had refused me assistance, saluted me with congratulations the very next day, when he beheld me comfortably clad in a postín, and never passed me on the road without notice. The kâfila báshí associated himself with my companions in a kind of mess; I consequently had my meals with him, and was invariably treated with kindness. This man I afterwards saw at Haidarabád in Sind, where he had engaged in the military service, on a salary of two hundred rupees monthly.

The kâfila halted two or three days at Shâll, to arrange the matter of duty, which is collected

there, and to allow men and cattle a little rest. My pains grew intense, so much so that I was unable to accompany my friends on their departure. I made an effort to keep pace with them, but finding I could not, I returned to the town, not venturing, from what I had heard of the Bolan pass, to run the chance of proceeding alone through it.

At Shâll I was very hospitably treated, being lodged in the clean and upper apartment of the principal masjít, near the southern, or Shikárpúr gate, and regularly supplied with abundance of good provisions. My afflictions daily became less; and at length I announced my ability to depart, whenever a kâfila might arrive. Two or three horse kâfilas from Kândahár passed, but I was not allowed to accompany them, it being feared I should be left behind on the road by the horses.

The town of Shâll, or, as often called, Quetta, and Kot, is surrounded by a slight mud crenated wall, and may comprise three hundred houses. These lie at the base of a huge mound, on which stands the ruinous citadel, now the abode of the governor Jellâl Khân. The bazar is tolerably well supplied, and is a fair one for a provincial town, being the centre of much traffic with the neighbouring countries. It is situated conveniently on the road between Kândahár and Shikárpúr, as well as with reference to Kalât, and other places. There are many small gardens belonging to the town,

which appear as if newly planted, the trees being young. There are the vine, the fig, the pomegranate, the plum, and, I believe, the apple and pear; mulberries and apricots are plentiful, as are also melons in their season.

The valley of Shâll may be about twelve miles in length, with an average breadth of three or four miles. It is well supplied with water; and, besides good wheat and barley, yields much lucern, with, I believe, some madder. The neighbouring hills—the native region of the wild sheep—provide ample pasture for very numerous flocks of the domestic animal; and Shâll is proverbially celebrated for the excellence of its lambs.

I was much pleased with the climate in this valley, the frosts during the night being gentle, and the heat of the sun being far from oppressive during the day, as is the case at Kândahár even during the winter. The people told me, that in another month they might expect snow, which would continue for two months, during which time they would be left to their own protection, the garrison retiring to the warmer country of Dádar; and I saw them repairing the casualties in the town walls. They entertain apprehensions from their troublesome neighbours, the Khâkas, who live in the adjacent hills to the east, and north-east, and who have, on more than one occasion, sacked the town.

The outsides of the houses in the town were

mostly covered with the carcases of sheep, salted and exposed to dry. The principal bones are extracted, and the limbs extended with small sticks. These flitches of mutton,—and they have, when cooked, very nearly the taste of bacon,—are called khaddít by the Baloches, and lándh by Afghâns. They are generally used for winter consumption, when the flocks of the pastoral tribes are removed to the plains of Kachí.

Besides the town of Shâll, there are in the valley a few other villages, as Ispangalí, and Karâní; the latter under the hills to the west, inhabited chiefly by saiyads, and boasting many gardens; with many small hamlets, belonging to the Sherwâní Bráhúís, towards the south. There are likewise some castles contiguous to the town, the principal of which is owned by Samandar Khân, a Dúrání nobleman of note.

The valley of Shâll was originally held by the Kâssí Afghâns, who still dwell in the town and immediate vicinity. Having passed under Bráhúí rule, the Sherwâní tribe have intruded themselves into the southern parts of the valley; and some of the villages bordering on it, and included in the district, as Kúchílák, on the road to Peshing, and Berg, on the road to Mastúng, are held by Khâkas, wholly or chiefly.

CHAPTER XVI.

Civility of a Brâhman —Join a kâfila.—Sir-í-âb.—Kâfila báshí.—Bráhúí tribe. — Dasht Bí-dowlat. — Mimicry of Shahábadin.—Sir-í-Bolan.—Kajúrí —Vigilance. — Bíbí Nání. — Garm-âb.—Kirta.—Road from Garm-âb.—Khúndillân.—Dangerous locality. — Good scenery.—Abundance of forage.—Plain of Dádar.—Penible march. — Pass of Bolan. — Its advantages.—Separation of hot and cold regions. — Change in natural productions. — Dádar.—Produce.—Halt.—Surrounding hills.—Ferocious tribes. —Extreme heat. — Fracture of soil. — Sickness.—Proceed with difficulty. — Nárí river.—Encounter. —Hindú.—Escape. —My shoes taken. — Returned. — Miss road. — Regain it.—Morning repast.—Baloch youth.—Hâjí Sheher.—Baloch soldiers.—Shâll múlla. —Various conjectures. — Ziárat. — Tirkárí products.—Kâfila.—Bâgh.—Scarcity of water.—Tombs of Mastapha Khân, &c.—Afghân conspiracy.—The saint beheaded.—His character. Departure from Bâgh. — Character of country. — Reflections. — Sweet bájara. — Dangers of Dasht Bédárí. — Progress. — False alarm. — Rojân. — Castles, &c.— Formerly subject to Kalât.—Jágan. — Kâsim Shâh. —Charitable offerings.—Shikárpúr.—Its renown for wealth. — Its rise. — Flourishing state under Duránî rule.—Its decline. — Its former influence. — Supplied the funds for Afghân wars. — Construction. — Buildings. — Defences. — Bazar.—Fruits and vegetables.—Canals and irrigation. — Trade. —Inhabitants. —Revenue. —Governor. —Lakkí—Insecurity.—Boldness of robbers.—Coinage and weights.—Importance of Shikárpúr to the Dúránís.

A LARGE kâfila arrived from Kândahár, of a multifarious description, and I was allowed to join it. During my abode at Shâll I had received

many attentions, from a respectable and wealthy Brâhman of Bikkanír, named Rúghlâll. Learning I was about to leave, he invited me to his house in the evening; and after asking me if I could teach him to make gold, to plate copper with silver, and to cure diseases of the eye, he provided me with what I needed much, a suit of cotton clothing, and a supply of flour and roghan for my journey. My Mússulmân friends found a kid-skin, into which they placed my provisions, and slinging it over my shoulders, I followed the kâfila, which had preceded me.

As soon as I joined it one of the camel-drivers, finding that I was going to Shikárpúr, took my load and put it on one of his animals, so I walked unencumbered. The first march, of five or six miles, brought us to Sir-í-áb, beneath a small detached hill at the extremity of the valley, where we halted, near the source of a rivulet of fine water, which gives a name to the locality. There was some tilled land here, but no inhabitants. To our right was the high mountain Chehel Tan, and where it terminated to the south, we descried the small pass, or lak, as here called, leading to Mastúng, so famed for its fruits. To our left were alike hills, and in front, the Dasht Bí-dowlat, over which the high road to Shikárpúr passes. The director, or báshí of the kâfila, was named Baloch Khân, and the camel-driver who had befriended me by lightening me of my

burden, proved to be in his employ. This led to Báloch Khân inviting me to join his party, which of course was very agreeable to me, and I at once became easy in the kâfila. We were here joined by a pastoral tribe of Bráhúís, who were proceeding to the warmer countries below the pass. They mustered above three hundred firelocks; and as the journey from hence to Dádar was esteemed perilous, their company was acceptable.

Early in the morning, having filled the massaks, or skins, with water, we left Sir-í-âb, and skirting the eastern base of the small hill we had halted under, we then struck across the bleak, sterile plain of Bí-dowlat. We occupied the entire day in the transit, and by evening gained the entrance into the Bolan hills, and having crossed a very slight ascent, we decended gradually into a darra, or valley, where we halted. There was no water here, but our people had provided against the want. We were this night highly amused by a witty fellow, called Shahábadín, who personated one of the Atchak Zai, and proffered to diclose where ōbō, or water, could be found. He imitated the tone and expressions of the savages exactly, and extorted loud peals of laughter from his auditors. I had got over the first march to Sir-í-âb pretty well, but the long one of this day proved too much for me, although the road had been good, and I experienced a renewal, in some degree, of my former pains.

On the following morning, our course led us along the valley, which had a continual but gradual and easy decent. To march was toilsome, as the bed of the valley was filled by small stones and pebbles. From it we gained another valley, with which it communicated; and here, after a short distance, we came upon a variety of springs, the water of which gushed from the rocks to the right, and formed a stream. Some of the springs discharged large volumes of water, which released themselves with a considerable noise. This spot is called Sir-í-Bolan; and the sources are those of the rivulet, which has fixed its name upon the pass. We did not halt here, but proceeded until we reached Kajúrí, a spot so called from a solitary date-tree, which arose opposite to us in graceful majesty,—an emblem of our approach to more genial climes. Our road was throughout this march along the same darra, and over the same kind of pebbly surface. We had seen no inhabitants, but occasional tracks across the hills seemed to indicate their existence near. During the night the sentinels were particularly alert, keeping up an incessant discharge of matchlocks, and shouting "Hai! Kábadár! Hai! Kábadár!

Our next march continued through the darra, and we lost the Bolan rivulet, while to the left the country became more open. The road also became less stony, as we reached Bíbí Nání, where we found

another rivulet, which, I was told, came from the hills of Kalât. This place is a shrine of some repute, and has some curious legends connected with it. The hills here yield fuller's earth, or some analogous substance. The road winds through the low hills at this point, and enters the extensive plain of Kirta. The river flowed to our left, and crossing the plain we halted at Garm-âb (warm spring), or the sources of the third river we meet with in the Bolan pass. About half a mile to our left, or to the north, was the small village of Kirta, inhabited by Baloches, subjects of Kalât, but at the mercy of the predatory hill tribes. Many of the women came to procure water from the springs, which, as their name implies, are tepid, and in the pools formed by them are myriads of small fishes. The houses of Kirta were constructed of mud and stones; and amongst them was a square tower. There is some land cultivated, principally with rice, and there might be much more, were there any security.

Our Bráhúí companions were desirous that the kâfila should have halted at Kirta for a day, but this was not acceded to, although the march we had in front was through the most critical part of the pass. The kâfila therefore proceeded without them.

Leaving Garm-âb, we came upon a large marsh, with a muddy bottom, and much choked up with reeds and flags. It is formed by the waters of Garm-âb, and from it issues the clear stream, which hence, to the termination of the pass, was to be our

attendant. This marsh immediately precedes the entrance into a series of defiles, and is not, I believe, to be avoided by beasts of burden, who with difficulty wade through it. Pedestrians, like myself, leave it to the right, and follow a slender path winding around the enclosing hills. In this march we had continually to cross and re-cross the river, whose bed was generally occupied with large boulders, and occasionally with flags. The water was delightfully transparent. During the early part of the day the darra was more or less open, or not so contracted as to be termed, justly, a defile, but on approaching a spot called Khúndillân the hills on either side closed upon each other, and the narrow passage between them was entirely filled by the water. Previous to arrival here the kâfila was condensed, and the armed and mounted men formed in a body, it being judged fit to move with caution and be prepared, in a part of the pass which, of all others, seemed to be the most dreaded. Within the defile there was a large cavern in the hills to the right, and under it a pool, said to be unfathomable;—there was evidence of great depth of water in the limpid and azure-tinged water. The scenery was here sufficiently good; indeed, throughout this day's march the natural features of the several localities were interesting. Emerging from the defile, we traversed a fine open space, favourable for encampment, with the river to the right, and also winding to the front. Crossing it, we again

passed through defiles into another and lengthened darra, but wide and open;—and this traversed, other defiles led us into a more spacious valley, where there was an abundance of coarse grass. It may be observed, that there is throughout this journey more or less forage, particularly from Khúndillân; there is also a good quantity of cultivable soil; and, from the admirable command of water, it is obvious that, were the country secure, great quantities of rice might be grown. As it is, exposed to perpetual depredations, no one dares to settle in the valley, or cultivate its soil. Neither is adequate advantage taken of its plentiful pastures, for no one ventures to graze them. From this last valley, which has an appellation I forget, derived from its herbage, a short passage cleared us of the pass altogether, and brought us into the plain of Dádar. The broken ground here was covered with stunted trees and brushwood, and we had finally to cross the river, which flowed to the right hand. Passing a few old tombs and shrines, we at length halted on the borders of a canal of irrigation, with the town of Dádar and its date-groves in sight, some two or three miles distant.

I could have enjoyed this march under other circumstances, but what with its length, and the ill condition I was in, it proved a pénible one to me. The constant crossing of the river, and the necessity of tramping so often barefooted, nearly exhausted me, and my feet at the close of the journey were

sorely blistered. It was in vain I strove to keep company with the kâfila; and before reaching Khúndillân,—behind it as usual,—two or three shots, fired from the hills, caused me to raise my eyes, when I perceived three or four men. They were, however, too far off to give me trouble, and I saw that they were moving from, and not towards me.

The magnificent pass of the Bolan may be said to be, throughout its extent, perfectly level, the gradual ascent of the upper portion of it, and the slight kotal, or pass, if deserving the name, by which the Dasht-Bí-dowlat is gained, scarcely forming exceptions.

It is interesting on many accounts: being, with the Múlloh pass, far to the south, the only route of this level character intersecting the great chain of mountains, defining, on the east, the low countries of Kach Gandáva and the valley of the Indus; while westward, it supports the elevated regions of Kalât and Sahárawân. There are many other passes over the chain, but all of them from the east have a steep and difficult ascent, and conduct to the brink of the plateau, or table-lands. Such are the passes of Takárí and Nághow, between the Bolan and Múlloh routes, and there are others to the north of the Bolan. This pass is no less important, as occurring in the direct line of communication between Sind and the neighbouring countries with Kândahár and Khorasân. It also constitutes, in this

direction, the boundary between the Sard Sél and Garm Sél, or the cold and hot countries. The natives here affirm, that all below the pass is Hind, and that all above it is Khorasân. This distinction is in great measure warranted, not only because the pass separates very different races from each other, speaking various dialects, but that it marks the line of a complete change of climate, and natural productions. As we near Dádar we behold the âkh, or milky euphorbia;—no plant is more uniformly found at the verge of the two zones: belonging to the warmer one, it stands as a sentinel, overlooking the frontier, over which apparently it may not step.

Our next march was merely a change of ground, and brought us within a mile of the town of Dádar. I was unable to visit it, but it appeared to be walled in, and of some extent, containing many tolerable looking houses. The Hindús of the bazar resorted to the kâfila to traffic. The neighbourhood was well cultivated; the soil, besides being naturally good, is well watered by numerous canals, large and small. Many hamlets are sprinkled over it; and the produce, besides grain, consists of sugar-cane, and the indigo plant. There are two fazls, or harvests, the vernal and hibernal. The town is held by the Khân of Kalât, and the governor is generally one of his household slaves.

We halted near Dádar for two days. Transit-fees were levied from the kâfila; after which our

company, augmented by Baloch traders, started for Bâgh.

The hills in this part of the country describe a vast semicircle, the principal ranges to the west, before noticed, stretching away to the south, and ending only on the shores of the ocean. Immediately to the north, and north-east of Dádar, are other hills, enclosing the valley of Síbí, and the abodes of Khâkâs, Kadjaks, Shílânchís, Bárrú Zais, Marrís, and other mingled Afghân and Baloch tribes: while to the east extend a succession of ranges, the southern termination of the great Súlímân chain running parallel to and west of the Indus. On the side bordering on Dádar and Kachí, they are inhabited by savage tribes, whose predatory habits render them a great annoyance to the inhabitants of the plains, as they frequently issue from their fastnesses in overpowering numbers, and plunder the villages. On the opposite side they look down upon Sanghar, Déra Ghází Khân, and the Kalât chiefs' districts of Hárand and Dájil. The heat at Dádar is singularly oppressive, and the unburnt bricks of the old tombs are pointed out as having become of a red hue in the fervent rays of the sun.

At a little distance from Dádar a line of jabbal, or low hills, or rather a fracture in the surface, extends from east to west across the country, and separates the particular valley of Dádar from the great plain of Kach Gandáva. The road throughout this fissure is level, but the broken mass assumes

a variety of fantastic shapes, and may have a breadth of three or four miles. Where it ends, the hard level plain begins.

I had scarcely commenced the march from Dádar when I was seized with vomiting, occasioned I knew not by what, unless by the water, which here has a bad repute. It was night when we marched, both to avoid the heat of the day, and that the manzil, or place of intended halt, was distant. The kâfila soon passed me; and helpless, I laid myself on the ground, and awaited morning. I was fearful of losing the road. At the dawn of day I arose, and continued my way. I passed through the fracture just noted, and had reached the plain beyond, when my disorder drove me to seek the shade of some low hills to the right of the road. Here two or three horsemen of the kâfila, who had stayed behind, came to me. They kindled a fire, their object being to smoke chirss. They encouraged me to proceed, telling me I should find the kâfila at a village, the trees of which were visible in the far distance. I strove to do so, but was soon redriven from the road; and this time, the bank of a dry water-course afforded me shade. At length, with my strength somewhat renewed, I again followed the road, and by evening, approached the village of Hírí.

Here was a river, the Nárí, to which I hastened to appease my thirst; and on crossing a ravine to regain the road a ruffian assailed me with a drawn

sword, and ordered me to accompany him. Clearing the ravine, he examined my postín, and the kid-skin bag containing the remnant of my flour, which I chanced to have with me this day. Much parley ensued, he insisting I should follow him, and I objecting to do so. I told him, if he was a robber, as his weapon made him superior, to take what he wanted; to this he replied by putting his fore-finger between his teeth, and shaking his head, signifying, I presume, that he was not one. I was unable to prevail upon the fellow to depart; when a Hindú suddenly made his appearance. Neither I nor my oppressor had before seen this man; an angel could not, however, have more seasonably interposed. The Baloch, still unwilling to relinquish me, said I was a thief, but the Hindú would not admit it; and asking me if I belonged to the kâfila, told me it was on the other side of the village. On hearing this, and that I had friends near, the fellow relaxed, and I and the Hindú passed over to the other side of the ravine. The Hindú separated from me, and I made for the road, when the Baloch, looking and seeing me alone, called me to return, and as an inducement plied me with stones. Having the ravine between us, and descrying three or four men in a cultivated field adjacent, I paid no farther attention than to return him his missiles, and the abusive epithets he liberally bestowed with them.

I next went to the men in the field, and told

them the Baloch striking across the plain was a robber. My tattered garments were again explored; and certainly had I possessed anything worth plunder it would have been taken. As it was, the elder of the men remarked, "What could be plundered from you?" and in the same breath asked me to exchange my shoes for a pair of cháplas, an uncouth kind of sandal. I refused, although the shoes were old, and absolutely worn out, as they had become convenient to my feet; yet my refusal was of no avail, and the shoes were taken from me; the men asserting that I gave them of my free-will, and I, that they were forcibly seized. It was promised that a youth should conduct me to the kâfila, which was said to be two cosses distant. The good Hindú, it seemed, had told me it was here to disentangle me from the Baloch. May his righteous purpose excuse the untruth. The old man, however, on putting the shoes on his feet, said they were not worth exchanging, and returned them. He then placed his fingers upon his eyes, and swore that he was a Músulmân, and no thief. He invited me to pass the night at his house, by way of atonement, and assured me of good entertainment. I might have trusted myself with him, as this application of the fingers to the eyes is equivalent to a most solemn oath, but it was my object to gain the kâfila. I therefore declined, and the road being pointed out to me, I struck into it.

Night coming on, I repaired to some old sepulchres, or zíárats, on the road-side, to await the rising of the moon, the better to find my way. By moonlight I proceeded, but it was soon manifest that I had missed the road, and, ignorant of its direction, I thought it best to tarry until morn, so I wrapped myself in my postín and went to sleep.

At daybreak I observed, not far off, a man of respectable appearance, of whom I inquired the road, stating that I had gone astray. He lamented that a Mússulmân, for such he supposed me, should have been compelled to sleep on the plain, and leaving his own path, he guided me into mine. In a short time I made a village, situated on the Nárí river. The river occupied a wide bed, and the banks on either side were high. I descended into the bed, and under shelter of the near bank I passed the village unobserved. Beyond it, I took my frugal breakfast, soaking my scraps of bread in the waters of the stream.

Here I was accosted by a youth, who also wanted to exchange shoes. He had himself a new pair, and perfectly sound. The exchange would have been to his prejudice, as I pointed out to him, yet I could not afford to part with my old and easy ones. He did not, however, insist. I was hardly yet aware that a Baloch generally prefaces robbery by proposing exchange, or by begging some article, as the plunderer of the Afghân tribes

near Kândahár first asks his victim if he has any tobacco or snuff. The brother of Mehráb Khân of Kalât was encamped near this village with a party of horse.

From the river-bed I passed through a fairly wooded jangal of small bér, mimosa, and tamarisk trees. It swarmed with the pastoral Bráhúí tribes, who had recently arrived, and taken up their winter quarters here. Beyond this belt I reached the small town of Hájí Sheher, held by Máhomed Khân, the sirdár of the Sherwâní Bráhúís. It was walled in, and contained a small but good bazar. The two domes of its principal masjíts had been conspicuous for a long time above the jangal. Within the walls were perhaps two hundred and fifty, or three hundred houses, Hindú and Máhomedan; without were groves of large bér and mimosa-trees. The Sherwâní chief levies a transit-fee on merchandize. I found that the kâfila had stayed the night here, but had passed on in the morning for Bâgh.

A Hindú directed me as to the road I was to take, but cautioned me not to go alone. I went on, having become habituated and indifferent to danger and adventure. The same kind of light jangal prevailed. I was soon passed by three Baloch soldiers, mounted on camels. One of them said to me, in Persian, "Ah! ah! you are an Uzbek." I told him I was not, but he maintained that I was, laughing, and in good-humour. This was not

the first time I had been taken for one of these Tartars.

In the town of Shâll, notwithstanding my own affirmations, confirmed by many of the inhabitants, that I was a Farang, or European, several believed that I was an Uzbek. The múlla, or priest, who officiated in the masjít, where I was lodged, one day informed a large company, with an air of great self-satisfaction that I was a Turk. He nodded his head, and winked his eyes, as if his superior penetration had discovered an important secret. Another individual seriously annoyed me by persisting that I was a kârígar. This term I had heard in Dáman and the Panjab used to denote a bull. It was to no purpose that I contended I was a "mirdem," or man, and no kârígar, or, as I understood it, bull. The individual in question would have it that I was one, or at least a kârígar. A better acquaintance with languages taught me that the word was employed in Persian to express an adept, or expert person, in which sense, no doubt, the man intended it. At the same place a woman daily visited me, always bringing some trifling present of fruit, sweetmeat, &c., and craving my blessing. I could not surmise why she thought me qualified for the task, until I heard her one day tell another woman that I was the "díwâneh," or idiot, from Mastúng.

Continuing my route through the jangal, I came upon a deserted and ruinous castle, and then upon

a village to the left of the road. It was dark when I reached a cluster of villages and date-groves, which I was so certain was Bâgh that I did not inquire, and satisfied that I should find the kâfila in the morning, I retired for the night to a zíárat, and quietly reposed.

It turned out, however, that I was mistaken, and when I arose at daybreak, I found that the place was called Tirkárí, and that Bâgh was a good coss farther on. The greater part of this distance traced the river-bank. The country here was populous, and well cultivated. The soil is fertile, yielding sugar-cane amongst its produce; júwárí and bájara here, as throughout the province, are the principal objects of the agriculturist. The preference shown to them would seem to show, that they require little moisture, and that experience has proved them to be adapted to the soil and climate. They subsist both man and animal, and are grown in such quantities as to be largely exported. In favourable seasons, or when the supply of rain has been sufficient, the returns are said to be excessive. Other kinds of grain, as wheat and barley, are raised, forming the spring crops, and the Jet cultivators, or zamíndárs, are allowed to be very skilful.

I found the kâfila at Bâgh, between the town and river, and in a grove of mimosas.

Bâgh is one of the most considerable towns of Kachí, although containing not more than six to eight hundred houses. It formerly was in a more

flourishing condition, and many Hindú soukárs, or bankers, resided at it. They have removed to Kotrú, where they think themselves more secure under the government of a petty dependent chief than under that of the weak paramount authority of Kalât, administered by a household slave. The bazar is still respectable, as the site of the place preserves it from total decay. It has the monopoly of the trade in sulphur, derived from the mines near Sanní; and the government officers collect transit-duties from traders. I was astonished to learn, seeing the river was so considerable, that fresh water was frequently scarce at Bâgh, and that at certain seasons it was an article of sale: but I was assured that, in a short time, the channel of the stream would dry up, and water only be found in wells, dug in its bed. I was also informed, that wells made in the town or neighbourhood, yielded a fluid, too saline to be applicable to useful purposes.

Close to Bâgh are some conspicuous tombs, covering the remains of remarkable persons. Amongst them are those of Mastapha and Réhim Khân, preserved in the same monument, half-brothers, and both sons of the illustrious Nassír Khán. Mastapha Khân was renowned for his valour, and fell by the hands of his brother, Réhim Khân; the latter was slain by the sister of Mastapha Khân. Another tomb commemorates a famous politico-religious character, put to death by Shâh Zemân. The Vazír Fatí Khân,

afterwards so notorious, then a mere youth, was a disciple of this worthy, as were a great number of the young Afghân nobility. The initiated formed a conspiracy to dethrone the king, and to assassinate his minister, Waffadár Khân, and to raise the Shâhzâda Sújah to the throne. The plot, on the eve of accomplishment, was revealed to the minister by one of the accomplices. Sarafrâz Khân, the father of Fatí Khân, expiated the crime of his son, who escaped, and many of the conspirators were seized and put to death. A party was sent to Bâgh with orders to bring in the head of the holy man, the father or patron of the dark and foul treason. This event is worthy of note, as it was the proximate cause of the convulsions which have since desolated Afghânistân. Of the character of the holy man of Bâgh there can be little doubt, although he has since death been canonized. He was a Súfí, and, with his disciples, professed himself to be a "Húsan perrast," or, "admirer of beauty."

We halted three or four days at Bâgh, and on taking our departure forded the river about half a mile below the town; nor did we afterwards see it. We made three or four marches, and reached a village on the borders of the desert belt, called the Pat of Shikárpúr, or, sometimes, the Dasht Bédárí.

During our progress we passed a well-cultivated country, but the villages were mostly either in ruins

or entire and deserted by their inhabitants. It was wonderful to see the immense fields of bájara, in the most thriving state, and apparently mature for harvest, but not a soul to reap them, or even to claim them. The cultivators had fled before the hill marauders, who had scoured the country. As the kâfila slowly paced over the afflicted land a mournful interest was excited by the contemplation of the melancholy scenes around us. It was no less painful to reflect on the probable misery of the poor people forced to abandon their property and homes. Nor could such feeling repress the sentiment of contempt for the feeble government, unable to protect its subjects, for it was admitted to be powerless against the licentious banditti of the mountains.

The village we halted at after leaving Bâgh was peopled, so was the one on the borders of the Pat; the intervening country was vacant, as described. In passing the extensive fields of bájara the men of the kâfila distinguished a variety, whose stem had a saccharine taste, little inferior to that of sugar-cane. They discriminated it by inspection of the leaf, but I vainly sought to acquire the secret. They said no sugar could be extracted from it.

There is considerable danger from predatory bands in crossing the desert tract which now spread before us. Its name, "Bédárí," or "vigilance," implies as much, and truly, from the multiplied robberies and murders committed on it, it has become of

infamous notoriety. The kâfila báshí determined to make but one march across it, and we accordingly started about sunset, with our massaks filled with water.

We were in motion the whole of the night and following day, passing in our track a tomb to the right, whose elevation renders it serviceable as a point of direction, there being apparently no beaten road. Once during the day, a cloud of dust being observed, the kâfila was halted, the men with matchlocks assembled, and the horsemen took up position in front; the camels were also condensed, and made to kneel. The arrangements were good, but unnecessary; the dust, being merely the effect of a whirlwind, subsided, and the journey was resumed.

Some time after passing the tomb we descried a long line of jangal before us. This at once denoted the termination of the desert, and our approach to the territory of Sind. We proceeded about two cosses through this jangal, in which some cultivated land was interspersed, and about an hour before sunset reached Rojân, where we halted.

There were here two castles, or rather villages, enclosed within walls. Fields of bájara and cotton were around them. The water, of very indifferent taste, was procured, and in small quantity only, from a series of shallow wells, or pits, under the walls of one of the castles. The inhabitants, or the chief of the village and his clansmen, were not disposed to be very civil, and on a slight occasion

seemed anxious to pick a quarrel with the men of the kâfila.

I understood that Rojân was subject to Mehráb Khân, but I apprehend my informant intended me to comprehend that it should be, as it once was. It was formerly held by Magghazzís, who were subjects of Kalât. They have been lately expelled, or, as was said, exterminated by the Jamâlís, a branch of the great Rind tribe, who have placed themselves under the sovereignty of Sind.

Our next march led us to Jágan, the road through the same kind of jangal, with villages and cultivation occasionally occurring. Jágan is enclosed, and has a small bazar. We here found Kâsim Shâh, the Governor of Shikárpúr. He visited the kâfila, cordially embraced the báshí, and arranged the matter of duty in a free, gentlemanly manner.

As most of the traders, and others of the kâfila, were established at Shikárpúr, and as the perils of the journey were considered over, kairáts, or charitable offerings, were made at Jágan. The more opulent provided sheep, with which they regaled themselves and their companions.

While competent to perform ordinary marches, I was little able to get through long ones, and the unusually severe one across the Dasht Bédárí had brought me into great distress. The kâfila marched from Jágan to Shikárpúr, but I could not pass the distance at once, and went quietly on from village to village, well treated by the peasantry, a mild and

unassuming people. In two or three days I reached the city of Shikárpúr, of which I had heard so much. I found it large and populous, but was somewhat disappointed with regard to its appearance, although reflection soon suggested that I had no reason to be so.

This city, renowned for its wealth, is particularly celebrated for its Hindú bankers and money dealers, whose connections are ramified throughout the countries of Central Asia, and of Western India. It is especially the home of these people, where their families are fixed, and where are detained those of gomastahs, or agents, located in foreign countries.

As the city is not understood to be one of great antiquity, it is possible that the influx of Hindús to it is not of very distant date, and that it was occasioned by the fluctuations of political power. As the existence of some great centre of monetary transactions, in this part of the world, was always indispensable for the facilities of the commerce carried on in it, it is not unlikely, looking at the facts within our knowledge connected with the condition of the adjacent country during the last two centuries, that Múltân preceded Shikárpúr as the great money mart, and that from it the Hindús removed, converting the insignificant village of the chace into a city of the first rate and consequence.

Shikárpúr, no doubt, attained its high rank under the Dúrání monarchy of Afghânistân, and much of the prosperity of its bankers was due to the vicious

operation of that institution, and to the errors of the Dúrání character. Many enriched themselves by loans to the ministers of state, generally careless financiers; and by acting as treasurers to nobles, who deposited with them the spoils of their provinces and governments, and who, subsequently, died without revealing the secret to their heirs.

The fall of the Dúrání empire has been accompanied by a correspondent decline at Shikárpúr, both by depriving its capitalists of one great source of their gains, and by causing an uncertain and disturbed state of affairs in the surrounding countries. This decline has, moreover, been aided by the growth of a strong power in the Panjâb, and by the consequent renovation of its trade, and commercial marts. Many of the former bankers of Shikárpúr have since established themselves in the cities of Múltân and Amratsir,—the latter, at the present day, rivalling the importance of Shikárpúr at its proudest epoch.

It is not unlikely, that the decline of Shikárpúr, and the breaking up of its monopoly, may be ultimately favourable to the regions around; for its influence, pushed beyond its legitimate exercise, was, it may be suspected, injurious on the whole. It was so grasping, that not only by accommodating the various governments did it anticipate their revenues, but it seriously depressed agriculture by absorbing, in return for advances, the produce of the soil. In fact, the unlimited command of capital possessed by the

Shikárpúrís placed at their disposal the entire resources of the state, and of the country, with the profits of foreign and domestic trade. All were poor but themselves; and their wealth was noxious to the general community, and unhallowed, as all wealth must be, acquired from the necessities and impoverishment of others.

To the curious in Dúrání history, it may be pointed out, that from Shikárpúr were supplied the funds which set on foot those successive inroads into, and invasions of the neighbouring countries, which are recorded in every page of it; until the monarchs lost their credit, and the restless nobles, no longer occupied in foreign expeditions, directed their ambition against each other and the throne, nor terminated the fatal strife until they had involved it and themselves in ruin,—a frightful, but natural result of the system of waste at home, and of rapine abroad, which had characterized the short-lived monarchy.

As a city, Shikárpúr is indifferently constructed. The bazar is extensive, with the principal parts rudely covered, so as to exclude or moderate the heat, which is extremely powerful. As usual in Indian cities, there is the inconvenience of narrow and confined streets; nor is too much attention paid to cleanliness. It would seem, indeed, that filth and wealth were inseparable.

Amongst the public edifices there are none commanding attention. Two or three masjíts only

occasion I had to wade through it, and a few days after found it so dry that I could scarcely have imagined there had ever been water in it. For the constant supply of the city, there are numerous wells within and without its limits, and the water is believed to be good and wholesome. For the irrigation of the cultivated lands, wells are also in general use, and require to be dug, of no great depth.

Formerly, the trade of Shikárpúr was much more considerable than at present, and it was very much visited by kâfilas. The bazar still exhibits great activity, and there are many fabrics still industriously carried on of cotton, the produce of the country. Its lúnghís are next esteemed to those of Pesháwer.

While the inhabitants are principally Hindús, its long dependence upon the Afghâns has led to the location at it of a great number of mixed and various Afghân families. There are also many Baloch and Bráhúí residents, but few or no Sindians, whom no attraction could allure to settle in an Afghân city. The character of the Máhomedan population is not good; the men are reputed ignorant and crafty, contentious and cowardly. The Hindús are, as Hindús everywhere else, intent upon gain by any manner or means; and the females of their community are universally affirmed to be licentious and lewd.

Under the Dúránís, Shikárpúr had its governor,

dependent, I believe, on the superior one of Déra Ghází Khân. Its revenue, including that of the contiguous district, was rated at eight lákhs of rupees; at present, about two lákhs and a half can only be obtained by extortion, loudly complained of. Of this two thirds belong to the Amirs of Haidarabád, and the remaining third to the Amír of Khairpúr. The governor is deputed from Haidarabád; and was now, as before noted, Kâsim Shâh, a son of Mír Ismael Shâh—generally employed by his masters in their negotiations with the Afghâns and British. Kâsim Shâh was, by great odds, the best of his family, and was deservedly held in the highest esteem by those over whom he was placed.

Shikárpúr is sixteen cosses distant from the island fort of Bakkar in the Indus, and twenty-one cosses from Lârkhana. About four cosses from it, on the road to Bakkar, is the once considerable town of Lakkí, which, populous and flourishing under the Afghâns, is said to have contributed one lákh of rupees as annual revenue.

It appears as if it had been suddenly deserted, the houses yet being entire and habitable; and now affords shelter merely to marauders. In the same direction, and on the bank of the Indus, opposite to Bakkar, is Sakkar, once a large town, and alike in ruins. This tract, with the fortress in the river, was held by the Dúránís; while Rohrí, a large town

on the eastern bank, was belonging to the chief of Khairpúr.

The occupation of Shikárpúr and district by the Sindians would seem to have been followed by an instantaneous decline in the prosperity of both. The towns in the neighbourhood were deserted, and the outcast population became robbers. I found matters in such a state that the inhabitants of Shikárpúr scarcely ventured without the walls with impunity, being frequently on such occasions robbed; although, to prevent such disorders, patrols of horse circumambulated the city during the day. On the banks of the canal I have mentioned, as about a mile from the city, are some Hindú fáquír establishments, with some full-grown pípal-trees. To the spot the Hindús frequently repair for amusement, and always on their days of festival. One of the holidays occurred during my stay, and drew forth an amazing concourse of people. The spectacle was pleasing, and even impressive. Strange to say, notwithstanding the crowds and the publicity of the day, there were Hindús plundered between the city and canal; yet Shikárpúr is not the only eastern city offering the anomaly of danger without and security within its walls.

Shikárpúr has, or had the privilege of coining; and the rupee is a very good one, nearly or quite equal in value to the sicca rupee of India; it has

also its peculiar weights and measures, and enjoyed under the Dúránís many immunities. It has probably passed the zenith of its prosperity, and may, possibly, experience a farther decline; yet its favourable situation, in the midst of a rich country, will preserve it from total decay; and, although it may cease to be the great money-mart of Central Asia, it will long linger in existence as a market for the surrounding countries.

To the Dúrání sovereigns its possession was of the highest importance, as from it they overawed Sind, and enforced the unwillingly rendered tribute of its chiefs. It may be observed, that the recent operations beyond the Indus have induced arrangements by which the city and adjacent territory are likely to be permanently placed under British authority.

CHAPTER XVII.

Odd appearance.—Sakkar.—Bakkar.—Rohrí.—Khairpúr.—Its insalubrity.—Division of country.—Introduction to Ghúlám Rasúl Khân.—His mission.—His attendants.—Bounty of Múlla Háfiz.—Departure from Khairpúr.—Dúbar.—Intricacy of road.—Súltânpúr.—Saiyad's rebuke.—Mattélí.—Extensive view.—Masjít companions, and society.—Conversation.—Supper.—Pítah Sheher.—Masjít repast.—Fáquír.—Mírpúr.—Sindí woman.—Hospitable villagers.—Suspicious men.—Khairpúr.—Sabzal Kot.—Evil guides.—Fázilpúr.—Meeting with Ráhmat Khân.—Peasantry of Sind.—Villages and masjíts.—Administration of country.—Hindús.—Saiyads.—Pírs.—Faquírs.—Takías.

I STAYED two or three days only at Shikárpúr, and determined to recross the Indus, and enter Northern Sind, with the intention of ultimately proceeding to Lahore, the capital of Máhárájá Ranjit Singh. My postín, many years old, was so full of rents, and so rotten, that I was every day occupied two or three hours in repairing it, and the variously coloured threads employed gave it a singular and ludicrous appearance. To add to the unseemliness of my habiliments, the dress bestowed upon me by the Brâhman at Shâll was fairly in tatters, and my shoes were absolutely falling from my feet.

I therefore passed through Lakkí, and reached

the deserted town of Sakkar, on the banks of the river. I passed the night at a masjít, where only one man, the múlla, attended, to pray. He brought me a supper of bread and dhâl, and sat in conversation with me some time, giving his ruler, Mír Sohráb, but an indifferent character.

In the morning I went to the river, and found a boat ready to cross, into which I stepped, when a Hindú asked me for a pais, the passage fee. I observed, I was a Hâjí, and had no pais, but he insisted I should give one. I had none, and rose as if to leave the boat, when he desired me to sit, and I passed over to Rohrí.

On a rocky island opposite to this town is the fortress of Bakkar, once held by the Dúránís, at this time subject to Mír Sohráb. Notwithstanding its imposing appearance, with its large extent of wall, and its indented battlements, it is of no consequence as a defensive erection in modern warfare, being entirely commanded by the heights and detached hills on either bank of the river, at Sakkur and at Rohrí. There are a multitude of Máhomedan tombs and shrines in this neighbourhood, many of them splendidly covered with painted tiles. One, eminently superb, stands on a small islet between the town of Rohrí and the larger island of Bakkar. The effect of the landscape is wonderfully increased by the beautiful stream, and the immense groves of date-trees, which fringe its banks. Every traveller will be delighted with the scenery of this favoured

spot, and its attractions allured me to linger in it two days, and to leave it with regret.

The town of Rohrí is seated on the bank of the river, immediately opposite to Bakkar, and the houses have an antique and venerable appearance in the distance. The interior of the town is comparatively mean, and the bazar, while well enough supplied with provisions, is very rudely composed. There is a peculiar rupee current here, and certain weights are in use, superior to the ordinary ones of Sind. Rohrí is an ancient site, no doubt succeeding Alor, the capital of Upper Sind at the period of the Máhomedan invasion, and whose remains are still known and pointed out near it.

From Rohrí the road leads through a wilderness of date-groves and gardens for above three miles, when, a little open country passed, I reached the small and pleasant village of Bâh, and thence another six miles brought me to Khairpúr. This place, originally a cantonment, has gradually increased in importance, until it has become the capital and residence of Mír Sohráb, the chief, or, as he is called, the Mír of Upper Sind. It appears, on approaching it, a vast assemblage of trees, none of the houses being observable, and consists, in fact, of houses and huts intermingled with groves and gardens in a remarkably confused manner. The bazars abound with foreign and native produce, and British manufactures are freely met with. The commerce of the place is extensive, and the Hindús are wont

to remark, that if the town were seated on the river gold might be gathered by handfuls. In the very centre of the bazars is the palace of Mír Sohráb. It occupies a large space, and is surrounded with castellated walls. From the exterior the only prominent object is the cupola of the masjít, decorated with green and yellow painted tiles. Khairpúr is a filthy place, and is esteemed unhealthy; which, looking at the stagnant marshes around it, and the extreme heat, need not be wondered at. The same causes, however, impart a beautiful verdure to its groves of mangoe, mimosa, and other trees. The water drank by the inhabitants has alike a bad repute; but the Mír has a well within his walls, so much esteemed, that his relatives at Haidarabád are frequently supplied from it. Mír Sohráb's territory extends southernly for a considerable distance, or forty cosses; and on the western side of the Indus he has a slip of land of about twenty cosses, He also has a third share of the revenue of Shikárpúr. He has given portions of his country to his sons, the eldest Mír Rústam, the second Mír Mobárak. Mír Sohráb is very old and infirm, and unpopular, from his tyranny and oppression. His son, Mír Rústam, although dissipated, is less disliked. Related to the Mírs of Haidarabád, he consults with them on matters of general and foreign policy, but they do not interfere in the administration of his country. His minister is Fatí Máhomed Ghorí, an aged and avaricious man.

When at Khairpúr passing by the house of Fatí Máhomed, at the eastern extremity of the town, my appearance, certainly singular enough, induced a party of men occupying a kind of shed, to make themselves more merry at my expense than I was pleased with, and I spoke sharply to them. I did not comprehend all they said, but knew that they called me a madman, as perhaps they supposed me to be. I was strolling in an adjacent mimosa grove, when one of the party accosted me and asked whether I was not a Feringhí. I said yes, and he invited me to return with him, as a mistake had occurred. He explained to me, that his master was Ghúlám Rasúl Khân, a Dáoudpútra, and vakíl, or envoy, from Bahâwalpúr. We went back together; and the vakíl was told I was not a madman but a Feringhí; on which he apologized, and I observed that it was possible I might be both. While we were conversing, one Gúl Máhomed, a companion in my journey from Quetta to Shikárpúr, whose business had led him to Khairpúr, came to call upon Fatí Máhomed. He was profuse in expressions of joy at seeing me again, and entered into such exaggerated details of my consequence, as to make a deep impression on the mind of the Bahâwalpúr envoy, who would not be satisfied unless I consented to stay with him, while he informed me that he expected his dismissal in a few days, when he would conduct me to his village near the Sind frontier, and provide me with clothing and other

necessaries. Ghúlám Rasúl had been deputed to treat for the restoration of Kot Sabzal, now the frontier town of Upper Sind, but which had been wrested from Bahâwalpúr during the rule of Sâdat Khân, father of the present khân. The plea of original right was set up by Mír Sohráb, and Ghúlám Rasúl, I presume, was entrusted with the commission of establishing the claims of Bahâwalpúr rather from the circumstance of his local knowledge, as he resided within twenty cosses from Kot Sabzal, than from his high condition or diplomatic ability. He was, nevertheless, a Dáoudpútra, of the same tribe as his prince, held a small jághír, and as respectable as khâns in Bahâwalpúr generally are.

He was scarcely above twenty years age, but very creditably corpulent, whether from natural bias or from indolence and good-nature. His attendants were about twelve in number, and a more supine or dirty set of men could not be imagined. Most of them were Saiyads, and besides eating their meals and smoking tobacco, did little but drink bang and intoxicate themselves. They were called soldiers, yet there were but two crazy matchlocks amongst the whole of them; and one of these was sold when I was with them. Ghúlám Rasúl was, however, as correct in conduct as mild and unoffensive in manner, and, as a mark of his station in life, one of his filthy attendants was his falconer. The vakíl was the only one of the party even tolerably clad, in white raiments, and he appeared to have only the suit he

wore, for when it was necessary to wash it he was obliged to sit wrapt up in a kamlah. His people endeavoured to convince me that he was a great man at home, and prayed me not to estimate him by his appearance abroad.

The party, being guests of Fatí Máhomed, the minister of Mír Rústam Khân, were provided with their meals from his kitchen; but they were so scantily supplied that I was glad an acquaintance I chanced to make relieved me from the necessity of trespassing upon them in this particular. Múlla Háfíz, in charge of Fatí Máhomed's masjít, became friendly with me, and brought me daily my food in his brass vessels, although it gave him the trouble of scouring them after I had used them.

I had remained above a month at Khairpúr; and, seeing no indication of movement on the part of Ghúlám Rasúl, determined to proceed without him. He was sorry I should go; but I was in so sad a plight as to clothing that I was compelled to go somewhere, under the hope of being better equipped. I therefore took leave of him one evening, when seven of his retinue were lying in so confirmed a state of stupefaction from their daily potations that they could not be aroused to receive my adieus.

I reached a small village, where I passed the night; and the next day, halting a while at Bâh, again entered Rohrí, where I learned as much as

I could of the road I had to traverse, and acquired the names of the villages I should meet with.

Conscious of my singular appearance, I felt ashamed to confess myself to be a Feringhí, and resolved, when accosted by any one, if asked whether I was a Patán, or this, or that, to say yes; and, if asked directly who I was, to reply that I was a Mogal, as I had discovered that appellation was vaguely applied, and might be assumed by any one with a fair complexion.

I made a small march from Rohrí, and the next day reached Dúbar, a hamlet with a rivulet flowing near it; there was an ancient masjít, and two or three Hindú shops. The jangal had become very close, and abounded with wild hogs, though adjoining the hamlet there was much pasture land. Dúbar was eight cosses from Rohrí. I there inquired the road to Súltânpúr, which, I was told, was fourteen cosses distant. The roads in this part of Sind are nothing but foot-paths, and are so continually crossed and recrossed by others that it is next to impossible for a stranger to know the one he ought to follow. I was continually losing my way, and, although I never failed to reach some village, and to be well received, it was five or six days before I found myself at Súltânpúr. The country was covered with the most intricate jangal, affording, however, subsistence in its grass to numerous herds of buffaloes. Súltânpúr was a large straggling village, surrounded with much cul-

tivated land; while fine groves of trees, mimosas, bérs, and pípals, were interspersed amongst the houses, and adorned the environs. The bazar was small, but neat, and abundantly supplied. I repaired to the principal masjít, placed on a mound, and seating myself with my back to the wall, extended my feet towards the west, or in the direction of the kabla. A saiyad rebuked me for so doing, and the officiating múlla asked him why it was improper, as I was not sleeping, but sitting. The saiyad explained, and related a tale of some unfortunate person, whose feet were nailed to the ground for placing them in a position like mine. Another individual, on my observing that I was going home, asked whether to the Feringhí country? I said that I was a Mogal, and he made no farther remark. I passed the night at Súltânpúr; and the saiyad who had taught me to be careful as to my feet, living in the apartments belonging to the masjít, furnished me with an ample supper.

I had now to inquire for Mattélí, said to be eight cosses from Súltânpúr, and was two or three days before I found my way to it, being constantly straying from the road, yet invariably well treated at the villages I accidentally fell in with. Throughout this part of the country the jangal is burned when new lands are to be brought under cultivation; and now on every side were seen huge columns of ascending smoke. Mattélí is a small town, seated on an eminence, at the foot

of which was a large expanse of water. In the neighbourhood are groves of enormous pípal trees. Its site and the character of its scenery is attractive, while its houses have a picturesque and ancient aspect. The bazar contains many Hindú shops, and the banyas have a darramsâla. That the locality has pretensions to antiquity, is shown by numerous remains of former buildings. From the summit of the mound a most extensive view is obtained of the surrounding country, presenting an immense mass of dense jangal, the positions of the several villages being marked by the clumps of taller trees, towering above the ordinary level. My next stage was Mírpúr, ten cosses distant, and it was pointed out to me by the inhabitants.

I took up my quarters at the masjít, and found there an aged but respectable-looking man, like myself, a masâfar, or stranger, who called himself a saiyad. At the period of the fourth prayers he was asked to join in them, but declined, affirming that he did not know the characters of the people, or of the múlla, behind whom he should stand. These reasons were admitted; not that they were good, but from courtesy. I was not asked to pray, as it was said I was a fáquír, and fáquírs are allowed to be graceless. We were afterwards joined by another masâfar, also a well-dressed old man, who gave out that he was a mír, and going to Múltân. Connected with the masjít were apartments, one inhabited by the person appointed

to take charge of the building, and others for the use of travellers and strangers. In one of them we were seated, the péshkidmat, or servitor of the masjít making an excellent fire; and the interval between the fourth and fifth, or last prayers, was spent in much amusing conversation.

It must be conceded, that three impostors were this night trespassing on the charity of the good people of Mattélí. The silver-haired sinner, who avowed himself a saiyad, was no more one than I was; the man of Múltân was too ignorant to be considered a mír; and certainly I had as little pretensions to be thought a Patán fáquír. Our saiyad, however, talked most, and in the Hindústâní dialect, better, perhaps, understood by myself than by his other auditors. He repeated some most egregious falsehoods, and gave an account of his travels in a country beyond Thibet, where beggars were fed on golden plates. He then, with reference to me, descanted on fáquírs, and described the several classes; to a class never possessing wealth, he, naturally enough, referred me. The péshkidmat was lost in wonder at these narrations, and often exclaimed on the singularity of having three persons from countries so distant assembled together, and seemed to be very proud of being honoured with their company. The saiyad, who, of course, came from no ordinary place, asserted that he was from a country beyond Chín, or China. His language betrayed him, and his

frequent mention of Delhí satisfied me as to where he belonged.

When the fifth prayers were concluded, and good Mússulmâns take their supper, we, the strangers, were thought of; and the péshkidmat, to whose duty the office belongs, brought in plenty of bread and sâgh, or vegetables boiled with roghan, and seasoned—a very general accompaniment to bread in Sind—the vegetables being spinach, or métí, (fenugreek.) My companions, to support their quality, and, perhaps, expecting something better, pretended to be unable to sup unless on meat; and the bread and sâgh was given to me, and I made a very good meal of it. Nothing more costly was produced, and the saiyad and mír were finally obliged to put up with bread alone, complaining loudly of the inhospitality of the people of Mattélí. When they departed in the morning one of the villagers observed, that the saiyad was a kímía-ghar, or alchemist; and my having been satisfied with sâgh was so well taken, that breakfast was brought for me before I left.

On the road to Mírpúr I could find my way no better than before; and on one occasion falling in with a stream of water, which I could not cross, I was entirely put out of the direction, and after much wandering, found a person who put me into the road for Pítah Sheher. It was evening when I arrived, and I was shown to the masjít, where

it seemed that visitors were rare, therefore my reception was the more cordial.

Many people assembled at prayers, and I was asked to join, but I replied, that I had not fit clothes. The remark was made, that it was a pity a Mússulmân should be prevented from saying his prayers for want of clothes. After prayers, the company partook of a common repast in the masjít, and I understood it was the usual practice. The múlla was a portly and superior person; he spoke to me in Persian, as I said I was a Mogal. One of his scholars, reading the Korân, surmised that I was a Feringhí, but his suspicion did not communicate to the rest, or they were indifferent. Alúâ, or a preparation of flour, roghan, and sugar, had been provided for the party, and I need not add, that the múlla was careful to regale me. Pítah Sheher was a large bazar village, and the vicinity more open than the rest of the country I had seen, and extensively cultivated. The inhabitants appeared respectable, and in easy circumstances. Besides grain, I had occasionally observed cotton-fields on my route, but here were many plots of sugar-cane. Mírpúr was still four cosses distant, and the interval I found wholly occupied by villages and cultivation. My postín was so oddly considered, and drew upon me so much attention, that I was detained at every village I came to. At one, a person accosted me as a Hâjí;

and, as I did not deny the character, he invited me to his house. He was himself, as he told me, a fáquír, but a wealthy one, as he possessed land, and was master of thirty cows. I stayed with him two days; and on parting he presented me with a stick to keep off dogs, which are numerous and fierce in all the villages. I had never been annoyed by these animals; but now that I had a stick in my hand, was twice bitten in the leg at the first village I came to; I therefore threw aside the unlucky weapon.

I next reached Mírpúr, a considerable town, with a mud fortlet, and an abundance of gardens, particularly well stocked with mango and plantain-trees; around spread a most luxuriant cultivation of sugar-cane. I merely passed through this town, inquiring the road to Khairpúr, four cosses distant. The jangal had now become drier, and there were many cotton-fields. As I travelled from village to village I always experienced the same good treatment, though I could not avoid being noticed. At one, a man asked me if I was a robber, not exactly meaning what he said, and I replied, that he was one himself. A female standing by, invited me to her house, and when there told me to sit down while she prepared some bread and broiled fish for me. She was the handsomest woman I had seen in Sind, and very smartly attired. The women of Sind dress gaily, in bodices worked over with variously coloured silks in many patterns, into

which they frequently insert pieces of looking-glass. My pretty hostess wore a red silk bodice, tastefully decorated in this manner, which set off her fine form to great advantage. So agreeable a companion detained me the greater part of the day, although I was not conversant enough with the country dialect to hold much profitable conversation, yet I understood that she had desires unaccomplished, and that she languished to become a mother. I moved on to another village and passed the night, and started in the morning at break of day. I soon came to a hamlet, where the people would insist upon my staying and taking wat with them. This wat is made of wheat boiled in milk, and seasoned with salt or sugar, and is the nâster, or morning meal, of the peasantry in Sind, eaten as soon as they rise. Some sixteen or seventeen brass basins of this preparation were set before me, besides two or three bowls of buttermilk, every house in the hamlet having furnished one. I laughed, as did the villagers, and to avoid offending, sipped a little from each, and, commending their hospitality, departed. I next encountered two men, of mistrustful aspect, who seemed to hesitate whether they should interrupt me or not. At length one of them said to the other, There is no telling how such people are inspired; and returning, for they had passed me, they craved my blessing. I gave it in due form, and breathed on them, when they went

satisfied away. I also met a fáquír, who asked where I came from. I said Kândahár, and he observed, why tell an untruth? I returned some careless answer, and he left me.

Khairpúr I found to be a good sized bazar town, and, like Mírpúr, encircled by numerous gardens, and richly cultivated lands. Sabzal Kot was now ten cosses distant. The intervening space showed more jangal and fewer villages, while there was more pasture and marshes. When I reached Sabzal Kot, observing it to be a walled town, I entered by one gate, and walking through the bazar, went out by the other. I understood that the town had declined in consequence; still it exhibited some activity in its trade. Being a frontier town, there is a small garrison, and three guns are mounted on the ramparts. Without the town walls was a small castle, in which resided Pír Baksh, the governor. My object now was to gain Fázilpúr, the gharrí, or castle, in charge of my former Bahâwalpúr friend, Ráhmat Khân; and I hoped, that if fortunate enough to find him there, I should be able to remedy my want of clothing. I learned that I had yet six cosses to travel.

On the road, which led through a thick jangal, I met two women, of whom I asked if I was on the right path, and they told me they were going my way. I accompanied them, and as we walked along they invited me to come to their

village. Before we reached it my fair friends began to suspect they might be taxed with having brought a strange man home with them, and coming to a path diverging from the road, they desired me to follow it, as it led to Fázilpúr. I was simple enough to follow their directions, and after a long journey, found that the path terminated in the jangal, and that the women had purposely sent me astray to get rid of me. I had nothing to do but to retrace my steps, or to strike at once into the jangal, towards the point in which I supposed Fázilpúr to lie, and though it was evening I took the latter course, and it was night before I came to a village, where was a neat compact masjít, in which I was accommodated; and though the hour was unseasonable, I was provided by the múlla with a good supper. Fázilpúr was only distant two cosses, therefore I was in no haste to depart the next day, and did not leave until the afternoon. When I descried the lofty towers of the castle some misgivings naturally arose in my mind, and I thought on the chances of meeting my Rohilla friend, and of the awkward trim in which I should appear before him. However, the time did not admit of scruples being entertained, and I walked up to the gate, where I found Ráhmat Khân sitting on a takht, or mud sofa, with a circle of his dependents around him. He immediatly recognized me, rose and embraced me, and in the society of old ac-

quaintance I spent a happy evening, relating where I had been, and what I had seen, with the many adventures which had befallen me.

In this journey through northern Sind, I could not avoid being impressed with favourable opinions of the peasantry. Everywhere they seemed to be a contented, orderly, and hospitable race. Their fertile and productive soil afforded them, at slight labour, the simple necessaries of life in abundance; and notwithstanding they complained of an oppressive government, their condition was very respectable. Their villages were composed of mud houses, and huts of reeds, but the climate required no more substantial structures. The masjíts were in all of them the better buildings, and were well tended, the people being, while simple in manners, equally devout as Músulmâns. Each of them was provided with a múlla, and other attendants; and at this time of the year, it being their winter season, warm water was prepared for the ablutions of those who attended prayers. On the other hand, the administration of the country was very defective, and the ill-paid hirelings of the chiefs scattered over it practised every kind of petty extortion and insult; not perhaps that they were authorized to do so, but because they were not looked after. The Hindús, who, as in the neighbouring countries, carry on, nearly exclusively, the trade, led a far from enviable life, unless, indeed, their gains

compensated for the contumely with which they were treated, for throughout Sind a Hindú cannot pass from one village to another without paying a fee to some Máhomedan for his protection. Saiyads are held in the greatest veneration, and many of them lead most licentious lives. It is often remarked, that a saiyad may commit any crime with impunity. The higher families amongst them, however, preserve so inviolate the sanctity of their houses that they will not allow them to be entered by their neighbours, or by any who are not, like themselves, reputed to be descendants of the Prophet. Sind also swarms with pírs, or spiritual guides of the higher class; and as they, in common with saiyads and fáqúirs, enjoy grants of land, and frequently whole villages, much of the revenue of the country is diverted to their support. The number of resident fáquírs subsisting upon the charity of the community is also very remarkable in Sind; no village is without them, and in towns they abound. Their residences, generally huts or sheds, are distinguished by a lofty pole, surmounted by a flag, and secured with ropes, in the manner of a flag-staff. There are kept chillams for the smoking of tobacco, and chirs, and utensils for the preparation of bang. Several fáquírs usually dwell together, and have charge of the tomb of some eminent predecessor, or saiyad. They invoke Imâm Hussẹn as their patron saint, and their

takías are the rendezvous of the lax and dissipated, who, unfortunately, are so numerous that they would excite a contemptible idea of the state of manners and society, did not one revert to the sober demeanour of the agricultural population.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Improvement in my affairs. — Fázilpúr Gharrí.—Inundations.— Their increase. — Reasons of.— Wish to leave. — Objections. — Nautch girl.—Departure.—Chúta Ahmedpúr.—Kází's greeting. — Costume. — Pass for a Mogal. — Peasantry. — Rámazân. — Fáqúir.—Noshára. — Súltânpúr. — Máchi. — Agreeable Evening. — Reasonable entertainment.— Mistaken for a Pír Zâda.— Town with Hindú pagoda.—Country. — Khânpúr.—Indigo.— Expanse of water. — Salám Khân. — Channí Khân-dí-Got. — Ramkallí. — Mogal-dí-Sheher. — The two Uches.— Ancient remains. — Sieges of Uch. — Gárra river. — Canal.—Pír Jelâlpúr. —Sújah Kot.—Change in aspect of country.—Bazars, &c. of Sújah Kot.—Múltân.—Citadel.— Commerce and manufactures. —Ruins. — Tombs. — Shrine of Shams Tabrézí.—Tradition.— Gardens and fruits.— Population.—Attacks by Ranjít Singh.— Capture and assault.—Consequences.—Sohand Mall.—Administration. — Departure from Múltân. — Masjít. — Encounter. — Wells. — Danger of road. — Seek shelter from rain. — Queer companion. — Familiar hostess. — Disagreeable company. — In risk of being misled. — Error discovered.—Custom of peasantry. — Idle menaces. — Reflection. — Beautiful river scenery. — Kamâlia. — Scene of Alexander's exploits. — Conjectures on Kamâlia. — The Ptolemæan march.—Saiyad-wâla.—Luxuriant country. — Bér-trees.—Nákot. — Níazpúr.—Respectable Síkhs. —Fine view of the Râví valley.—Noh Kot.—Arrival at Lahore. — General Allard. — Splendour of his establishments. — His subsequent decease.

I WAS soon enabled to exchange my old garments for new ones, and the ground, as a place of rest

at night, for a khât, with becoming coverlets, the luxury of which I had not known for many months. Ráhmat Khân was very anxious to improve my lean condition, and as he was somewhat of an epicure, it would have been my own fault had I not benefited by the good things from his kitchen.

Fázilpúr, though originally a very substantially-constructed gharrí, of kiln-burnt bricks, is falling into decay; and the khân of Bahâwalpúr abandoned a project for repairing it on the score of expense, even after materials had been brought to it for the purpose. It is said, that there was formerly a considerable town here,—of which the present gharrí may be a memorial,—and that the wells belonging to it, three hundred and sixty in number, are yet to be seen in the jangals. It is certain that brick wells occur; and it is not improbable that the country we now behold covered with swamps and jangals was once free from them, and smiling with cultivation.

East of Fázilpúr is, in all seasons, a large deposit of water, and during the periodical inundations of the Indus it becomes, with its dependent small hamlet, isolated. These inundations have sensibly increased latterly in this quarter; and I was told that at certain times the country is so completely under water that the communication with Khânpúr is, or might be, carried on with boats. Khânpúr from the bank of the Indus is fifty-seven cosses. On the western bank of the river, in the

parallel of Ladkhâna, there has, in like manner, been a manifest increase in the inundations. The tract, assigned in jághír to the great Chándí tribe, had been so unproductive from a deficiency of water that the inhabitants were distressed, and complained. Recently, however, the inundations have extended to it, and it is confessed that the cause for complaint has been removed. It may not be necessary to suppose a general increase in the water of the river, as the changes, of course, to which it is constantly liable, will account for these partial variations in the quantity of water discharged upon particular localities, whether they be due to the resumption of forsaken channels, or to the formation of new ones.

About a month passed with my good friends at Fázilpúr had so entirely set me up, that I grew impatient to prosecute my journey to Lahore, computed to be two hundred and forty cosses distant. Ráhmat Khân was urgent that I should await the return of a party he had despatched to Déra Ghází Khân, with a barât, or order for money, on the authorities there, being ashamed, as he said, that I should leave him without money in my pocket. I protested both against the necessity for intruding on his bounty in such manner, and against the delay which the uncertain arrival of his messengers might occasion. I have elsewhere mentioned that Ráhmat Khân was straitened in his means, and that his expenses greatly exceeded his income. Chance

now put him in possession of a few rupees; and I might have been allowed to depart had not a nautch girl appeared in the neighbourhood, and the killadár could not resist the temptation of the amusement afforded by the exhibition of her talents. She was accordingly sent for to Fázilpúr, and the diversions of an evening emptied his purse. Two or three days afterwards he contrived to procure four rupees from the Hindús of the hamlet, I only consented to receive two of them; and taking farewell of him and his companions, with the regret we experience when parting with friends, I made for Chúta Ahmedpúr, distant five cosses. Ráhmat Khân had given me a guide, and a letter to his party stationed at Bara Ahmedpúr, though I told him I should not revisit that place, having no desire to encounter again either the Bakhshí or the ague.

We arrived in the evening at Chúta Ahmedpúr, two villages amid the jangal having been passed on the road. I was led to the house of the killadár, who was a native of India, and commander of the regiment quartered there. He civilly received me; and I found sitting with him the dancing-girl who had figured at Fázilpúr. She asked if I had been pleased with her display, and I said I had been delighted. The kází of the town hearing of my arrival, sent to pray I would visit him. I went, and found a very corpulent old gentleman, seated on a chahárpâhí, on which he bade me also sit. I was scarcely in position, when he remarked to the people

about him, that I was a Kâfr; upon which I arose and asked, if he had called me to insult me. He assured me to the contrary; but not choosing to be refuted, repeated, in confirmation of his dictum, a verse from the Korân. I did not oppose such grave authority; and, after conversing some time, we all parted very amicably; for notwithstanding his conviction that I was an infidel, I found that he did not intend to give offence; and he lamented that the killadár had anticipated him in the gratification of making me the evening's guest.

In the morning my guide returned to Fázilpúr, and I proceeded alone towards Noshára, twelve cosses distant. I was now decently clad in white cotton raiments, made in the Rohilla fashion, had a white turban on my head, and a kammar-band around my waist, while I carried a double cháddar, or sheet, over my shoulders, which served to cover me at night. I felt that I had every right to call myself a Mogal, which did not seem to be doubted; and I moreover discovered that I was treated respectfully both on that account, and that my clothes were new and finer in texture than those worn by the peasantry. Every person I met inquired who I was, and where I was going; and my hands were often examined, when concluding they had not been employed in laborious toil, it would be affirmed that I was "mallúk," or of quality. At one village a Hindú placed himself under my charge, and avoided the payment of a fee for his protection.

It was easy to see that the peasantry were an inoffensive people, and I was pleased to observe that they were unoppressed, like their brethren in Sind, with the presence of disorderly fáquírs, and of shoals of rapacious government officers. A general feeling of security and content prevailed, in which the stranger participates, and he moves cheerfully forward, conscious that he is roving in a well-regulated land. It was also gratifying to hear the inhabitants speak affectionately of their ruler, although as pious Músssulmâns they lamented his dependence upon the Síkhs.

It was now the month of Rámazân, the great Máhomedan fast, which was rigidly observed. I was, however, guilty of nonconformity, justifying myself on the grounds that I was travelling, and would atone when I reached the end of my journey. Such excuses were usually admitted; but sometimes it would be remarked, that Mogals and Patáns were irreligious. On one occasion, when I had gone to a house to procure breakfast, an itinerant fáquír, resting himself, was lavish in the epithet of Kâfr, and asserted that no Patán ever kept fast or repeated prayers. In spite of his denunciations the people prepared bread for me. It was only in the morning that I had to encounter scruples of this nature, as in the evening meals are prepared as at other times.

Noshára was a small bazar town, situated on an eminence, with a deep ravine on the east. It had

a very large house, the residence of the kârdár, or administrator of the khân. Numerous villages had occurred between it and Ahmedpúr, and the jangal abounded with grass, becoming as I advanced more sandy. Beyond Noshára, I had heard at Fázilpúr, that there was more or less danger for six or seven cosses, and it was confirmed to me now, but as I had still two or three hours of day light I determined to proceed, although cautioned not to go alone by people in huts on the opposite side of the ravine just noted. The road was good, and a little after sunset I reached the village of Súltânpúr, where I inquired for the máchí's, or dhai's house, which was pointed out to me. It proved to be a respectable dwelling, and I was very politely welcomed. The mastèr provided me with a chahárpâhí, and brought the chillam, entering freely into conversation. The females were occupied in their domestic offices; and amongst them was a most engaging young girl, of sixteen or seventeen years of age—already, I found, a mother. After a bountiful repast we all retired into another apartment, where we formed a circle around a blazing fire, and passed a comfortable evening in discoursing on all kinds of topics. My host, as I told him I was from Herát, inquired when Kámrân would come and chastise the Síkhs, and I replied, in due time. This question I had often put to me; and I discovered there was a current belief that the prince of Herát was to be the avenger of Islám. The

beautiful young wife had her place by the fire-side, unconscious, perhaps, of her charms, or the admiration she was calculated to excite; and I could not help recalling to memory, as I ventured to look towards her, Dryden's lines—

——A blooming eastern bride
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.

In this apartment the family also slept; and so simple were their manners, or so little ceremony was observed with me, that my chahárpâhí was introduced and placed amongst them. In the morning, when I bade all of them farewell, I had only to pay four pais for my entertainment; to which I added, as a present, two pais to purchase linna, to colour my host's beard, observing that he dyed it of a red colour. He was quite delighted, and made me promise to visit him again when I returned, as I had informed him it was probable I should. I here was again informed that the road was dangerous, and therefore when I had gained it, it being little distant from the village, I sat beneath a tree in the hope that company would pass. As none came I grew impatient, and went on alone. I at length reached a hamlet, consisting of four or five peasants' houses and a masjít, contiguous to the roadside, with a well. The women came and embraced my feet, supposing me to be a pírzâda who had some time before honoured them with his presence. I strove, in vain, to disabuse

them, and they regaled me with a repast of bread, butter, and buttermilk. A young Albino boy was shown me, as being of my colour; and one of the good wives asked me when her son, who had gone on pilgrimage, would return.

From this hamlet I arrived at a small, but better-constructed town, the houses being built with kiln-burnt bricks. It was said to be midway between Chúta Ahmedpúr and Khânpúr, or twenty cosses from each. It was remarkable for having a Hindú pagoda near it. Hence to Khânpúr I passed on with the same facility, always well received, and generally not permitted to pay for my entertainment. The country was throughout populous, and the land near the villages well irrigated and cultivated. The desert of Jessalmír to the south frequently impinged on the line of road; and as the soil was drier the jangal was in consequence very slight, and the trees and shrubs of diminutive growth. Around Khânpúr villages were very numerous, the face of the country open, and the lands wholly in a state of cultivation. I have before observed that Khanpúr is a commercial town; and that it has long been so seems evidenced by the fact that one of the gates of Shikárpúr is called the Khânpúr gate; it is probable, indeed, that it may have been once of greater importance, its name signifying the Khân's City, and that it may have declined since the creation of Bahâwalpúr.

From Khânpúr to Allahabád, a distance of twenty

cosses, there is light jangal with a sandy soil; good villages constantly occur, and the inhabitants use, generally, bread made of rice-flour. In this part of the country indigo is largely prepared, and I often passed the cemented vats and tanks used in its manufacture. I apprehend the article is not costly, but being cheap and plentiful, it supplies principally the markets of the countries beyond the Indus, and is even carried to Bokhára. I did not exactly follow the high road, but skirted a large expanse of water to the north of it nearly the whole way; its surface was covered with wild fowl, and fish were caught in vast numbers in it, while there were excellent pastures near the margin. I understood that in course of time the water would disappear, whence I inferred that it was but the residue of inundations from the Panjâb rivers.

On arrival at Allahabád I paid my respects to my former and esteemed friend, Salám Khân, and remained two days under his hospitable roof. He was kind and obliging as before, and I might have stayed a longer time with him without intruding, but I deemed it right not to indulge too much on the road, now that I was hearty and able to make my way without inconvenience.

I therefore proceeded towards Uch, distant fourteen or fifteen cosses, traversing the central portion of the Khân of Bahâwalpúr's territory. Beyond a small rivulet, which defines on the east the plain of Allahabád, a transit of four cosses,

through a dry, sandy, tamarisk jangal, brought me to the small, but apparently commercial town of Channí Khân-dí-Got, and thence other four or five cosses conducted me to Ramkallí, where I passed the night at the máchí's house. This was evidently an old site. There are the remains of large kiln-burnt brick buildings, and the vestiges of an extensive mud fortress. The latter is said to have been destroyed by the great Bahâwal Khân, grandfather of the present ruler. Tradition affirms the antiquity, and the former opulence of Ramkallí; now it may have about a dozen inhabited houses, with a solitary Hindú shop. The locality is very agreeable, and embellished with straggling evidences of its old date-groves.

From Ramkallí, three cosses led me to the towns of Uch, embosomed in an immense assemblage of date-groves. Immediately preceding them was a small hamlet, called Mogal-dí-Sheher, or the Mogal City, worthy of note, as corroborating the testimony of Ferishta, that a colony of Mogals, having been chased from many places in Sind, were anciently permitted to settle here.

There are now two Uches contiguously seated. The eastern one is small, but contains a celebrated zíárat, a large, handsome, and old Máhomedan structure, to which many pilgrims repair. The western Uch is called Pír-ka-Uch, (the pír's Uch,) its revenue being enjoyed by a Pír Nassiradín, who resides there, and is acknowledged to be an un-

doubted descendant of one of the twelve Imâms. There are now no walls to this town, but the ruinous gates are standing. The bazar is covered over, but uncouthly, with rafters and matting, to exclude the heat. It is extensive, and well supplied; and I could not but notice the unusual number of confectioners' shops.

In the neighbourhood of the present towns are the most extensive ruins of the ancient cities, their predecessors, intermingled with a prodigious quantity of date-trees and venerable pípals. Many of the buildings are so entire that a little pains would make them habitable. They are built of kiln-burnt bricks, and in the best style of Indian architecture. Very many old wells are seen, some of which are still worked. With pretensions to remote antiquity, Uch flourished exceedingly under the Máhomedan sovereigns of India, and must have been a place of great strength, as it endured several memorable sieges. In 622 or 623 of the Hejra the emperor Altamsh made himself master of it, after a siege of two months and twenty days. Twenty years afterwards, it was invested by an army of Mogals, and at a later period it was the vulnerable point by which Taimúr opened to his arms the passage to India.

Leaving, with a mournful and interesting regret, the antique remains and sacred groves of Uch, I directed my course to the river Garra, eight cosses from it, and crossing at a ferry, came, two or three

cosses farther on, to a large cut, or arm, probably derived from it. I might have been perplexed as to the mode of crossing it, but, fortunately, I saw a person, before I reached it, strip himself of his clothing, and, placing it on his head, pass to the opposite side. I had therefore only to imitate him, and waded through the stream, some fifty or sixty yards in breadth, with the water of uniform depth, and up to my mouth, which I was compelled to keep closed. The water was tepid, whence I inferred that it was a canal I was crossing. About a coss beyond it I reached the small town of Pír Jelâlpúr, which contains the shrine of a Músulmân saint, a handsome building, covered with painted and lacquered tiles, and adorned with minarets and a cupola. The bazar was a good one, and in the neighbourhood of the town were decayed brick buildings, proving that the site was formerly of importance.

From Pír Jelâlpúr, a distance of eighteen cosses brought me to Sújah Kot, the country having been a little diversified as to character. For eight cosses beyond Jelâlpúr the jangal was sandy; it then afforded pasture for four or five cosses, and for the remainder of the road there was a great proportion of cultivated land. The nature of the jangal had also changed after passing the Gárra river; the tamarisk no longer predominated, as in the Bahâwalpúr country, or was seen only in trees of large growth, near villages, while over the

surface of the soil it was replaced by lighter trees, the karíta, the bér, and the kikker, or dwarf mimosa.

Sûjah Kot, or Sújahbád, is a considerable fortified town, and its lofty battlements, irregularly built, have a picturesque appearance. It has a very excellent bazar, and is the seat of some cotton manufactures, besides being famous for its turners in wood. There is a small garrison, and a few guns are mounted on the walls. Near it are several good gardens, particularly one bearing the name of Mozafar Khân. The town stands in a highly cultivated tract, and for two or three cosses to the south there were immense fields of sugar-cane. The cotton-plant is also abundantly grown.

From Sújah Kot the road leads through an arid jangally country for twenty cosses to Múltân, villages occasionally occurring. This city appears advantageously seen in the distance, but loses its effect on our near approach to it. It cannot be less than three miles in circumference, and is walled in. Its bazars are large, but inconveniently narrow, and, I thought, did not exhibit that bustle or activity which might be expected in a place of much reputed commerce. The citadel, if not a place of extreme strength, is one on which more attention seems to have been bestowed than is usual, and is more regular than any fortress I have seen, not constructed by European engineers. It is well secured by a deep trench, neatly faced with masonry; and the defences

of the gateway, which is approached by a drawbridge, are rather elaborate. The casualties of the siege it endured have not been made good by the Síkhs, consequently it has become much dilapidated since that period. It can scarcely be said to have a garrison, a weak party of soldiers being merely stationed as guards at the entrance. Within the citadel are the only buildings of the city worth seeing,—the battered palace of the late khân, and the Máhomedan shrine of Bahâwal Hâk. The latter, with its lofty gúmat, or cupola, is the principal ornament of the place.

Múltân is said to have decreased in trade since it fell into the hands of the Síkhs, yet its bazars continued well and reasonably supplied with all articles of traffic and consumption. There are still numerous bankers, and manufactures of silk and cotton goods. Its fabrics of shawls and lúnghís are deservedly esteemed, and its brocades and tissues compete with those of Bahâwalpúr. It still supplies a portion of its fabrics to the Loháni merchants of Afghânistân, and has an extensive foreign trade with the regions west of the Indus.

The ruins around the city spread over a large space; and there is an amazing number of old Mússulmân graves, tombs, masjíts, and shrines; and as all of them are held sacred, they would seem to justify the popular belief that one lákh, or one hundred thousand saints, lie interred within the hallowed vicinity. Many of these are substantial edifices, and

if not held to establish the saintly pretensions of the city, may be accepted as testimonies of its prosperity, under the sway of the Máhomedan dynasties of India. North of the town is the magnificent and well-preserved shrine of Shams Tábrézí; of whose memory the inhabitants are now proud, though, if tradition be correct, their ancestors flayed him when he was living. To this martyr's malediction is imputed the excessive heat of Múltân, the sun, in consequence thereof, being supposed to be nearer the city than to any other spot in the world. Shams, in his agony, is said to have called upon the bright luminary to avenge him, claiming a relationship, permitted by his name, which in Arabic signifies the sun. The powerful orb obligingly descended from his sphere, and approached the ill-fated city.

The gardens of Múltân are abundant, and well stocked with fruit-trees, as mangoes, oranges, citrons, limes, &c. Its date-groves also yield much fruit, and vegetables are grown in great plenty. The inundations of the Râví river extend to the city, but it is three miles distant, and has what is called a bandar, or port, in this instance expressive of a boat station; whence there is communication with the Indus, and, consequently, with the sea.

The area enclosed within the walls being compactly built over, the city may be supposed to contain not less than eight or nine thousand houses, or from forty to forty-five thousand souls. At the pe-

riod of its capture by the Síkhs it was held by Mozafar Khân, of the inferior branch of the Sadú Zai, Dúrání tribe, with the assumed title of nawâb. Ranjit Singh had made two unsuccessful attempts upon it, but had been compelled to retire, after devastating the country. The third time the Síkh chief approached, Mozafar Khân was willing to have averted destruction by accepting the terms proposed to him, but his followers were not consenting. Ranjit Singh made a feint of attacking Khânghar, a fortress some twenty cosses distant; into which the deluded nawâb threw the better part of his troops. Ranjit Singh immediately countermarched, and invested the capital. The defence was most obstinate, and the attack threatened to end, like former ones, in failure, when an adventurer, named Jones, in the Síkh service, took charge of the batteries, advanced them close to the citadel, and breached it. On the assault Mozafar Khân lost at once his life and sovereignty; and his daughter, celebrated for her beauty, her chastity, and her piety, fell over a heap of Síkhs, she had herself slain, as is asserted. A young son of Mozafar Khân was saved, and carried to Lahore, and—now a remarkably handsome youth—is in high favour with the Máhárájá. At present a Brâhman, Sohand Mall, resides at Múltân, as governor for Ranjit Singh, with the title of Súbahdár; and his jurisdiction is extensive, comprising the southern parts of the Síkh kingdom from the Satlej to the Indus. He has at his com-

mand a force of eight hundred Síkhs, under Gandar Singh, besides the garrisons sprinkled over the country. He is a popular ruler, and many anecdotes are related of his liberality and indulgence, even on matters connected with religion. The Síkh authority over the conquered provinces held by the Súbahdár being firmly established, the administration is mild, owing partly, perhaps, to his personal character, and two Síkhs are located at every village and hamlet on the part of the government. The peasantry make over a third of the produce of their lands: neither do they complain.

Having stayed two or three days at Múltân, I took the road to Lahore, and crossed an extensive plain, stretching from the city to the north. From this side the city is best seen; and it clearly stands on a mound, which while in it I was scarcely aware of. East of the road a large mud fortress is observable in the distance, and nearer a building, to which my curiosity led me. I found it a masjít, deserted, but in good preservation. It being noon, to avoid the heat, I seated myself therein, and strove, with needle and thread, to repair some deficiency in my garments. Thus engaged, a man, armed with sword and shield, suddenly stood over me. I had not heard him enter, and was a little taken by surprise; however, I calmly gave him a Salám alíkam, which he returned, and asked what I was about. I replied, that he could himself see what I was about. He then inquired where I was going; and telling him, he

asked if I was not afraid of the Kattí. I said that I was not, and he retired. I finished the job I had in hand, and after some time regained the high road. Forty cosses from Múltân is Kot Kamâlia; and throughout the distance the villages are few and wide apart; but there are many wells in the jangal, where the cultivator or owner of cattle fixes his abode, and where the traveller may obtain liberty to pass the night. I was frequently entreated to await companions, but travelled alone and escaped molestation, though on one occasion I had nearly essayed an adventure. I had reached a well, with a farm-house adjoining, early in the day, and, as rain came on, decided to pass the night there; a Hindú belonging to another well, who had alike sought shelter from the shower, having arranged with the people to prepare bread for my supper. I said that I was a Mogal going to Lahore. We were joined by a short thick-set person, of singularly queer countenance, who affirmed that he was on his way from Lahore to Múltân. He also notified his intention to remain the night. In a little time I was sent for into the house, as it turned out, because the mistress wished to see a Mogal; and I was shown into an apartment where the lady, a tall masculine woman, was stretched on her bed, an old dhai, or nurse, being also in the room. Some conversation passed between them, with a good deal of laughing, which I pretended not to understand, and which I presumed would not have occurred in the husband's

presence. However, I left them, and again in the evening was called into the house to eat my supper. I bought some milk to eat with my bread, and thinking of the other stranger without, sent him a bowl of it. I was, on retiring, provided with a charpâhí, and the stranger stretched himself on the ground beside it. In the morning I was about to start, when he said that he would accompany me to Lahore, but I reminded him that he was going to Múltân; he urged that he had changed his mind, and would return to Lahore. I observed, that he might do as he pleased, but that he should not go with me. He employed many arguments, but in vain; and finding that I did not move, he left the enclosure. I allowed two or three hours to pass over, and, supposing I had fairly got rid of him, I also left, and had scarcely gained the road when he appeared from behind a bush. I told him he should not accompany me, but he still kept by my side. After a short distance the path divided, and I was doubtful which direction to take. My impressions led me to follow that to the right, but the fellow persisted that the one to the left was the road to Lahore. I had great doubts, but, supposing he knew better than I did, I took his counsel. We reached a well, where the owner seeing my companion, asked him why he had not gone to Múltân. I instantly inquired if the road was that of Lahore, and was answered, no. I bestowed two or three curses on the fellow for misleading me, and returned; but he

was not to be shaken off, and protested that the other road was a long and dreary one, while this that he was showing was a cheerful one, and led by wells and villages all the way. On reaching the correct road I still found myself followed by him. I did not fear him, as he was unarmed; and it being the custom of the peasantry here to go from place to place with axes in their hands, and lop branches of trees as they pass along the road, to dry for fuel, there were abundance of stout sticks strewed on all sides, from which I selected one, and walked on without heeding him. At length, satisfied that I was intangible, he returned, uttering idle menaces that he would be after me, and I saw no more of him. It did not suggest itself to me at the time, but I have since conjectured this man must have been a thag, and but for the owner of the well he might have gained his ends. In so imminent danger may an individual unconsciously be placed, and by so slight an accident may he be preserved.

Before reaching Kamâlia the Râví river is crossed at a ferry; and I was directed along a path immediately tracing its bank for some distance, which was very agreeable. The margins of the stream are fringed with groves of date-trees, in which numerous wells are found, shaded by pípals. The opposite bank being embellished in like manner, the scenery up and down the river is fine and attractive. A tract of low sand hills and scanty jangal precedes Kamâlia, a small town with bazar.

It has an ancient appearance, and is constructed of kiln-burnt bricks. There is a fortress, built of the same material, which is held by a Síkh chief and his followers. One of them was pleased to accord me hospitable offices, conducting me to a garden-house, and providing my entertainment from the town.

I was now in a part of the country which, there can be no doubt, had been the scene of some of Alexander the Great's exploits. I had no authority to consult but memory, and was therefore unable to benefit by my journey to the extent that I could have wished. Yet I was not unobservant, and subsequently, when I had the opportunity to consult Arrian, I found his details remarkably clear, and fancied that I could follow his steps in this particular region, with little chance of error. I make these remarks because I think it probable that Kamâlia may have been the site of the fortress at which the great Macedonian hero had nearly become the victim to his temerity. Arrian also notes the slaughter of some Indians by Ptolemy, who had fled into a marsh. In passing through one of the villages about Kamâlia I saw a party of Máhomedan horsemen, armed with lances, manifestly going on some excursion, and I asked where they were going; they replied, to hunt the hog. I again asked where such animals were to be found, as the country was all sand, and was told there were marshes at some distance. I could

not but recollect this circumstance when I read the classical author.

From Kamâlia, the country becoming more populous and productive as I advanced, in three stages I made Saiyadwâla, a considerable walled town, with a spacious and well provided bazar, extending from one gate to the other. A few hundred yards west of it is a mud fortress, of some extent and solidity, surrounded by a trench. I was never interrupted, and found the villagers friendly and hospitable, and exclusively Máhomedans. Owing to the prohibition to kill kine, the herds of horned cattle were remarkably numerous.

From Saiyadwâla Lahore was forty cosses distant; and the intermediate country was rich, luxuriant, and well cultivated, abounding in villages, large and small. In most of them was the distinguishing square brick tower of the Síkh chiefs of former days; and we may conceive the state of society amongst these petty lords and tyrants ere Ranjit Singh's superior genius destroyed their power to annoy and oppress their neighbourhoods. The bér-tree is universal throughout this tract; nor is it confined to the vicinity of villages. It attains a much larger size than I have elsewhere seen, as does its fruit, which is so sweet and palatable, that I felt disposed to class it with other fruits, and to acknowledge it merited the name of Pomus Adami, which Marco Polo

has conferred upon it. Nákot, or gram, was very generally an object of culture. It is used to feed horses, as in other places, but bread is commonly made of the flour. I have noted Síkh sirdárs use it, which must have been from choice; but although sweetly tasted, I did not think it so good as wheaten bread, to which it is of course inferior in colour. Twelve cosses from Lahore the Râví is passed, the village of Níázpúr being seated on the eastern bank. There are many ferry-boats, being needed not only for passengers but to transport the cattle night and morning, as they are grazed in the jangals on the opposite bank. For three or four miles before I reached the river I had walked with a fine old Síkh and his lady, very handsomely dressed, and carrying a profusion of trinkets. They were as courteous as respectable in appearance, and I felt pleased to be in the company of good people.

From Níázpúr the road leads over a gently rising and sandy surface, but a magnificent and extensive view delights the eye, of the river winding in its course, and of the highly fertile and cultivated space bordering upon, and extending from its western bank. Few scenes present in greater perfection the charms of placid beauty and repose; and amid the various feelings to which they gave rise in my mind was that of homage to the sovereign, whose protecting sway has enabled his subjects to till their lands in peace, and in a

few years to change, as it were, the face of nature. One coss preceding Lahore is the small bazar village of Noh Kot (the new fort). It has, in contradiction to its name, an ancient and venerable aspect, and a large adjacent mansion is assigned for the residence of Ayúb Shâh, the mock king of Kâbal of the Sirdár Máhomed Azem Khân's creation, and who, expelled thence, has found an asylum with Ranjit Singh.

On reaching Lahore I had remaining half a rupee of the two rupees I had received from Ráhmat Khân at Fázilpúr. I had lived very well on the road, and had travelled three hundred and sixty miles. I was now, however, for a period, to live in a very different style, as I passed the rainy season at Lahore in the superb mansion of General Allard, whom I accidentally encountered as he crossed my path on my approach to the city. He surmised, notwithstanding my dress, that I was an European, and I explained to him that he was correct, in his own language, which absence and length of years had not disabled me from speaking fluently.

The establishments of the General were at this time on the most splendid scale, for the liberality of Ranjit Singh, who appreciated his merits, enabled him both to enjoy all the luxuries of a refined taste and to amass wealth besides. He was universally and deservedly respected. He has since been numbered with the dead; and remembering his attentions to me when a perfect stranger to

him, and cherishing a regard for his memory, I should regret, if in the latter part of his career he had been made an instrument of the idle projects of others, and that disappointment had given an impulse to the malady which carried him to the grave.

CHAPTER XIX.

Lahore.—Masjíts.—Masjít Pádshâh.—Tradition.—Masjít Vazír Khân.—Sona Masjít.—Liberality of M. Allard.—Desecration.—Bazars.—Mansions.—Palaces.—Fortifications.—Gates.—Ruins.—Tombs.—Shâhdera.—Its desecration.—The abode of M. Amìse.—Anárkallí.—Tale.—Tomb.—Occupation by M. Ventura.—Gardens.—Fruits.—Vegetables.—Shâlímár.—Commerce.—Noh Kot.—Former state of Lahore.—Assailed by Ranjit Singh.—Capture.—Síkhs.—Change in their system.—Govind Singh.—Bábá Nának—His doctrines—Character of his sect—His provisions—Converts—Prohibitions—Tobacco—Prophecies.—Lanka.—Grotesque pictures.—Growth of the sect.—Project of Aurangzib.—Increase of sect follows persecution.—Also increased by circumstances.—Licentious state of civil society.—Rise of Ranjit Singh.—Inclination towards Hindúism.—College at Benares.—Brâhman craft.—Motives.—Síkh demeanour.—The Granth.—Síkh Prayers.—Customs.—Mr. Foster's prediction.—Nának's institutions.—Change effected.—Improved state of government and of society.—Ahmed Shâh's opinion.—Zemân Shâh's designs and projects.—Ranjit Singh's perfidy.—Dúránís expelled Lahore.—Ranjit Singh acknowledged King—His moderation—His acquisitions.—Invasion of Sujáhânpúr—Of Bahâwalpúr—Of Peshâwer.—Threatens Sind.—Acquires Hárand and Dájil.—Change in policy.—Revenue.—Military force.—Enumeration.—Disciplined troops—Character as soldiers.—Natives of the Panjâb.—Females.—Costume.—Mode of tying the hair.—Occupations of the Síkhs—Their good qualities—Learning.—Social observances—To what referable.—Toleration.—Irregular cavalry.—Mode of warfare.—Its value.—Akâlías.—Pay of

troops.—Dassérah.—Ranjit Singh—His youth.—Accession to power—His increase of sway.—Causes of elevation.—A good general—His achievements—His popularity.—Excuse for his excesses—Respect for learning—His liberality of sentiment—His servants.—Mír Dhaiyân Singh—His brothers—Popular belief.—Karak Singh—His character.—Insolence of Mír Dhaiyân Singh.—Shír Singh—His character and prospects.—Suppositious sons.—Probability of disputed succession.—Person of Ranjit Singh—His infirmities—His dress—His titles.—Summary of character.—Comparison.

LAHORE, the capital of the Panjâb and of the territories of Ranjit Singh, is a city of undoubted antiquity, and has been long celebrated for its extent and magnificence. The extravagant praises bestowed upon it by the historians of Hindústân must, however, be understood as applicable to a former city, of which now only the ruins are seen. To it also must be referred the current proverb, which asserts that Isfahân and Shíráz united would not equal the half of Lahore. The present city is, nevertheless, very extensive, and comprises many elegant and important buildings; amongst them the masjíts Pádshâh and Vazír Khân are particularly splendid. The Sona, or Golden Masjít, claims also attention, from the attraction of its gilded minarets and cupolas. The masjít Pádshâh is substantially built of a red friable sandstone, and from its size, the loftiness of its minarets, the dimension of its cupolas, and the general grandeur of the whole, is an edifice worthy of the founder, said to be the great Aurangzíb. According to popular tradition,

Lahore is indebted for this structure to the following circumstance. The emperor ordered his vazír to raise a masjít for his private devotions, which should exceed in beauty all others known. The minister accordingly, at a vast expense, completed that now called Vazír Khân, and announced the consummation of his labours to the sovereign, who proceeded at once to inspect the building and to offer up his prayers. On his road he heard the remarks of the multitude, "Behold the emperor, who is going to the masjít of Vazír Khân." He retraced his steps, observing, that his design had been frustrated, inasmuch as the masjít had acquired not his name but that of his minister. He then personally commanded the construction of another, superintended its progress when building, and succeeded in connecting his name with it.

The masjít Vazír Khân is a sumptuous edifice, distinguished by minarets of great height. It is entirely covered with painted and lacquered tiles, inscribed with Arabic sentences. They have a gorgeous appearance; and it is vulgarly asserted, that the whole of the Korân is written on the walls and various parts of the building. Contiguous is a small bazar, the rents of which were formerly allotted to the repairs of the masjít, and to support the necessitous who frequented it. These funds are otherwise appropriated by the Síkhs.

The Sona, or Sonára Masjít, independently of its gilded domes, is a handsome and extensive edifice.

It was in a neglected state, to the great scandal of the Mússulmân population of Lahore, until the officers of M. Allard represented the matter to him, and under his auspices renewed it; the general handsomely contributing the funds required for re-gilding. The masjíts Pádshâh and Vazír Khân have been long since desecrated by the Síkhs, who killed swine in them, and converted their courts into stables. The masjít Pádshâh is generally assigned by the Máhárájá as a residence for some European in his service.

There are also many other masjíts, and some saráís, deserving attention; moreover, some of the Hindú temples are remarkable.

The streets are very narrow, as are the bazars, which are numerous, and distinguished by the names of the occupations carried on in them; as the Goldsmiths', the Ironsmiths', the Saddlers' bazar, &c. There are some exceedingly lofty and bulky mansions, well built of kiln-burnt bricks, (the material of which the city is mostly constructed,) many of them recently erected. They have no exterior decorations, opposing an enormous extent of dead walls; which, however, convey an idea of the large space enclosed. Amongst the most conspicuous of these for size is the abode of the Jemadár Khúshiâl Singh, a renegade Brâhman of the neighbourhood of Sirdánha, elevated by Ranjit Singh from the rank of a scullion to that of a general. The sons of Ranjit Singh have each of them a large palace within the

city, and the Máhárájá, in his occasional visits to Lahore, resides in the inner fort, or citadel, which occupies the north-west angle of the city. Here are extensive magazines of warlike stores, and manufactures of muskets, cannon-balls, &c.

Lahore, seated within a mile of the Râví river, is not dependent upon it for water, having within its walls numerous wells. It is surrounded with a substantial brick wall, some twenty-five feet in height, and sufficiently broad for a gun to traverse on it. It has many circular towèrs, and divers sided bastions, at regular intervals. Ranjit Singh has surrounded the walls with a good trench, and carried a line of handsome works and redoubts around the entire circumference, which are plentifully garnished with heavy artillery. He is constantly improving the fortifications, under the guidance of his French officers, and is removing the vast heaps of rubbish and ruins, which, as he justly observes, would not only cover the approaches of an enemy, but form ready-made batteries for him. There are many gates, as the Múrchí Derwâza, the Lohár Derwâza, the Delhí Derwâza, the Atak Derwâza, &c. The last is also called Derwâza Tanksâla, or the Mint Gate, an appellation that led the Jesuit Teifenthaller into the error of supposing that in his time one of the city gates retained the name of Taxila. At the Lohár Derwâza is a large piece of ordnance, called the Banghí, and at the Múrchí Derwâza are two or three tigers, encaged.

Without the walls are scattered on all sides the ruins of the ancient city, which—although in some places cleared away by the express orders of the Máhárájá, as I have just noted, and in others for the erection of cantonments and parade grounds for the troops of the French camp, besides the constant diminution of their bulk in the search for bricks and building-materials,—are still wonderful, and convey vast ideas of the extent of ancient Lahore. Numerous tombs, and other structures are still standing, some of them nearly entire; and such is their solidity that they seem, if not absolutely to foil old Time, to yield to him almost imperceptibly. West of Lahore, on the western bank of the Râví, is the beautiful and far-famed tomb of the Emperor Jehângír, or the Shâhdera. It is classed by the natives of Hindústân amongst the four wonders which adorn their country, and is certainly executed in a style of architecture eminently chaste. Under Síkh domination, this delightful specimen of Indian art is neglected, and falling into ruin, besides being subject to desecration. The Máhárájá gave it as a residence to a French officer, M. Amise, who caused its chambers to be cleared of their accumulated filth, and put the surrounding garden in order—when he died. The Mússulmâns did not fail to attribute his death to his temerity and impiety in daring to occupy so sacred a place; and they believe that the shade of the emperor actually appeared to him, and an-

nounced his death as the punishment for his crime. Whether the Máhárájá credited this tale I know not, but he much regretted the loss of M. Amise, and has since ordered the building to be closed, and the entrances to be built up, while he has forbidden farther dilapidation and desecrations. The situation of the Shâhdera is most agreeable, and has induced Ranjit Singh to raise a garden-house immediately to the north of it.

Another remarkable building south of the city, and between it and the river, is the tomb of Anárkallí, as called, concerning which is the following popular story. Anárkallí (anárgúl, probably, or the pomegranate blossom) was a very handsome youth, and the favourite attendant of an emperor of Hindústân. When the prince would be in company with the ladies of his háram, the favourite page was not excluded. It happened, that one day the emperor, seated with his females in an apartment lined with looking-glasses, beheld, from the reflected appearance of Anárkallí, who stood behind him, that he smiled. The monarch's construction of the intent of the smile proved melancholy to the smiler, who was ordered to be buried alive. Anárkallí was, accordingly, placed, in an upright position, at the appointed spot, and was built around with bricks, while an immense superstructure was raised over the sepulchre, the expense of which was defrayed, as tradition relates, by the sale of one of his bangles. There were

formerly extensive gardens, and several buildings connected with the tomb, but not a vestige can now be traced of them. This monument was once occupied by Karak Singh, the eldest and only legitimate son of the Máhárájá, but has subsequently been given to an Italian officer, M. Ventura, who has converted it into a háram. Adjacent is the handsome house of M. Allard; and in front of it, a parade ground intervening, are the lines of the regiments and battalions under their orders. To the east of the city are the cantonments of the troops, commanded by M. Avitabile, and Court, with the residences of those officers. The mansion of the former, a Neapolitan, is painted in a singular and grotesque fashion.

In the neighbourhood of Lahore are many large and delightful gardens; the fruit-trees, flowering shrubs and plants, are, however, those common in Hindústân, being very little mixed with the products peculiar to western countries. The fruit-trees are, the mango, the mulberry, the plantain, the apple, and peach, of inferior size and quality; the jáman, the fig, the karinda, the quince, the orange, the lime, both acid and sweet, and the date; the fruit of the last, however, is scarcely eatable. Pomegranates also abound, but are not prized, and there are a few vines. Melons are so abundant that they are scarcely considered fruit, although regularly cultivated; they are, moreover, very indifferent. There is a large proportion

of the lands near the city devoted to the culture of vegetables, for the consumption of the inhabitants. Here, again, the ordinary eastern varieties, as bádinjâns, gourds of several kinds, karellas, cucumbers, &c., are chiefly produced, there being no novelties. Large fields of sweet-fennel are common, grown, I believe, for the sake of the seed. The flowers are in no great variety, and selected with reference to the odour, chaplets being made of the blossoms, and sold in the bazar. Gardens here, as in all eastern countries, are open to the public; and individuals, preserving due respect for the fruits and flowers, may freely enter and stroll about them; but the mean practice prevails of selling the produce; from which sale the proprietor of a garden, be he king or slave, derives a profit.

About three miles north-east of Lahore is the renowned and once delightful garden of Shâlímár. There are still the marble tanks and fountains, with costly machinery, that once supplied the jet d'eaux. The gay pavilions, and other buildings of this immense garden, have suffered not so much from the dilapidation of time as from the depredation of the Máhárájá, who has removed much of the marble and stones, of which they were composed, to employ them in his new constructions at the favourite religious capital of Amritsir, and the contiguous fortress of Govindghar. Still, in its decline of splendour, Shâlímár has sufficient beauties to in-

terest and delight a visitor, whose regret will be powerfully excited that desolation should be suffered to obscure the noblest garden which belonged to the imperial family of Taimúr.

Lahore, although possessing a certain degree of trade and traffic with its populous vicinity, is a dull city, in a commercial sense. Amritsir has become the great mart of the Panjâb, and the bankers and capitalists of the country have taken up their abodes there. It has also absorbed, in great measure, the manufactures, and its prosperity has allured to it a vast number of the starving artisans of Káshmír.

Noh Kot, about a mile and a half south of Lahore, was the head-quarters of Ranjit Singh, when he succeeded in obtaining possession of Lahore, which, I was informed, was effected in the following manner.

The city, and destined capital of a powerful Síkh kingdom, was then occupied by four Síkh chiefs, each independent of the other, and all engaged in mutual warfare. While affairs thus stood Ranjit Singh presented himself before the place with seven hundred horse. The common danger united the four chiefs, who prepared to defend the city. The young invader, unable, from the description of his troops, to make any impression upon a town surrounded by a substantial wall, took up a position at Noh Kot, whence he harassed the vicinity. He remained some months adhering to the plan he

had adopted, when the cultivators of the garden grounds, whose labours were necessarily suspended, became reduced to extremities to procure subsistence. Seeing no probability of a termination to the evil, they applied to Ranjit Singh, and volunteered to conduct him into the city by some unguarded or neglected entrance. He confided in their promises; and his troops were introduced at night, when, after the slaughter usual on such occasions, Ranjit Singh became master of Lahore. Hence may be dated the downfall of the independent Síkh chiefs, and the consequent supreme authority of their conqueror.

It may be deemed superfluous to allude to the religious belief and opinions of the Síkhs, as those subjects have received the attention of Sir John Malcolm, and others, who had access to the best sources of information. My notice on such topics will therefore be brief. It is certain that the Síkhs of the present day have widely deviated from the system of the founder of their sect, and have become, in place of harmless free-thinkers, a nation of infuriated fanatics. This important change dates from the reign of Aurangzíb, whose intolerance led him to persecute the Síkhs; and, as persecution naturally begets resistance, the ninth and last of the Gúrús, Govind Singh, who at that time presided over them, ordered his followers to arm; and the sword was drawn, which has never since been sheathed. Govind Singh, the Síkhs pretend, pre-

dicted to the bigoted emperor, that his kingdom would be wrested from his successors by the men who visited Hindústân in large ships. There is a considerable difference between the system established by the first gúrú, or teacher, Bábá Nának, and that introduced by the last warlike gúrú, Govind Singh.

Nának, I believe, was born of Máhomedan parents, and was, probably, imbued with Súfí principles, which closely resemble those he promulgated, as respects the nature of the Deity, the kind of homage most agreeable to him, the relative connexion of body and soul, and the prospects of man in a future state; they also coincide as concerns the doctrine of equality, a condition of society which, however impossible, is inculcated by both systems. It may be doubted whether Nának ever contemplated that the few disciples congregated around him were the forerunners of a great and numerous people, destined to future command and empire, or that the doctrines he announced were decreed to spread over extensive regions; yet, in the political state of his own and neighbouring countries at the time he lived, the secondary laws he prescribed for the regulation of his nascent community were, unconsciously perhaps on his part, the ones best calculated to effect objects so extraordinary, by the organization of a sect, that silently but surely increasing in strength and numbers, should, in the fulness of time, develope itself, and assert its claims

to power and ascendancy. In the first place, his tenets, if such they may be called, could be appreciated by the most ordinary understandings, as they are rather agreeable delusions than sound and stern truths, requiring the pain of reflection to be understood. In the second place, he allowed his votaries every indulgence possible in diet and their manner of life, compatible with the prejudices of the Hindú and Máhomedan population around him. And lastly, by enjoining conversion, he provided for the increase of his community, by securing the accession of the oppressed and degraded of all faiths and nations. By removing the distinction of caste, he decoyed the miserable and ignorant Hindú. And it is notorious that it has been amongst the lowest of the Jet agricultural population of the Panjâb, that the vast proportions of Síkh converts have been made; and nothing is more remarkable at the present day than the want of general knowledge prevailing amongst the Síkhs, even of the highest rank.

With regard to articles of food, Nának has merely forbidden his followers to eat the cow, a prohibition due to the indelible prejudices of the Hindús, of whom he hoped to make converts. He has permitted unqualified indulgence in wine, and other intoxicating liquors. Like most founders of new religions, he must needs forbid something, and he has therefore proscribed tobacco, which his adherents are not permitted to touch; but as he

well knew the practice of smoking the condemned herb was general among Hindús, and could not but be aware that tenacity of old customs and the reluctance to dispense with wonted enjoyments were characteristics in human nature, he wisely enacted, lest the interdiction might prove an obstacle to his favourite plan of conversion, that any Hindú on being admitted a Síkh, who had previously been accustomed to smoke tobacco and to drink wine, might, according to his pleasure, continue the use of one or the other. In his character as an inspired person, it became him to prophesy. He has done so, and in the various prophetical legacies ascribed to him, his followers view the predictions of the capture of Mûltân, Káshmír Mankírah, Pesháwer, &c.; in short, of every success that has happened to them. There yet remains to be fulfilled the capture of Kâbal, before the gates of which vast numbers of Síkhs are to fall, and their subjection to British authority for one hundred and forty years, (which they suppose will commence on the demise of Ranjit Singh.) At the expiration of that period they are to emerge from thraldom; and being masters of Hindústân, are to cross the sea and destroy the fortress of Lanka. They are also to possess themselves of the holy Mekka, and terminate the Máhomedan religion. The books I have seen containing these prophecies are embellished with many pictorial illustrations. The capture of Lanka is depicted by a number of

monstrous looking men, with maces, demolishing a series of towers, placed on the head of another figure, equally hideous in appearance.

To allow the sect to acquire consistency a considerable period of repose was necessary, and it is probable this was secured by the unassuming habits and moderate pretensions of the community under the direction of its first eight gúrús, as I am not aware that any mention is made of it before the time of Aurangzíb. Up to that period their proud Máhomedan lords may have considered them as merely a sect of Hindús, objects of contempt but not of persecution. How long they might have continued in this obscure state is uncertain, had not the energetic but intolerant Aurangzíb, amongst other vast projects, undertaken to reform religion, and, with this view, instituted an inquiry into the various faiths professed by his subjects. In the Panjâb, a land it would appear in all ages fruitful in heresies, there were abundance of innovations and abuses needing the strong arm of the monarch to repress; and the Síkhs, with their doctrines, which by him must have been deemed inconceivably impious and absurd, would naturally call for the decided exercise of his zeal. His attempts, by coercion, after argument and command had failed, to compel them to renounce their tenets, induced them, as I before noted, to arm, and by revealing to them their strength and powers of resistance, effected an entire change in the constitution of their community. I

am unacquainted with the particulars of Aurangzíb's persecution of the sect, but the Síkhs say, that their gúrú, Govind Singh, fell into his power. He may have made many martyrs, but we need not the testimony of his history to be certain that he made little progress in the reclamation of the infidels. When death delivered the Síkhs from so terrible a persecutor the anarchy which attended the succession must have been in every way favourable to the augmentation of their numbers, and consequently we find them exciting tumults, which required the presence of the Delhí sovereigns to repress. From this time they were most likely, according to the temper of the age, or of the governor over them, subject to more or less oppression, as the course of events had made them too prominent to escape notice; and as yet being unable, from want of unity, to keep the field against their adversaries, they adopted the plan open to them, of irregular annoyance, and fell into the condition little better than that of banditti, in which they were found when the campaigns of Ahmed Shâh again bring them forth to observation. During this time, however, they had resolved into a multitude of little bands under various leaders, and had established strong-holds and places of refuge without number. Their subsequent aggrandizement is so well known, that an allusion to it suffices. The rapid decline of the Dúrání empire, and the appearance amongst them of Ranjit Singh, enabled them

to assume a regular form of government, and to erect a powerful kingdom from the wrecks of the states and principalities around them.

It must be obvious, that the religious opinions of the Síkhs are no less at variance with the dogmas of Hindúism than they are in opposition to those of Islám. Still, the inveterate hostility with which they regard the professors of the latter faith have induced an involuntary inclination in favour of the votaries of Brâhma, which these,—although it cost some efforts to overcome their repugnance, allured perhaps by the splendid successes of the Síkhs, and indulging bright expectations from their growing power,—have at length thought prudent to reciprocate. By establishing colleges of their sect at Benáres the followers of Nának have, in some degree, ceased to be a peculiar class, as they have thereby evinced the desire to be incorporated with the great body of Hindús; and the Brâhmans who accorded the permission to do so must have anticipated some overweaning advantages, or they would scarcely have admitted amongst them a people whose main principle of conversion, and doctrine of equality, alike strike at the very roots of the system they uphold. We may suspect that the crafty hierarchy, conscious of the very little chance of the re-establishment of Hindú supremacy, and anticipating the probable extension of the new and vigorous sect, and its eventual domination in Hindústân, were willing, in such a case,

to associate themselves with it, and, for the preservation of their own dignity and position to adopt it—as in times of yore they did the victorious race of Katrís, or Rájpúts.

In ordinary intercourse with Hindús the Síkhs treat them with little courtesy, and the banya, or trader, seldom receives a more delicate appellative than kotá, or dog. The Brâhman, however, is more respected, and forms a part of the establishment of every chief, assisting in religious offices. As the number of gúrús, or teachers of the sect, was limited to nine, who have long since passed away, the Granth, or sacred volume containing their precepts, is now the subject of veneration, and for it they have a very great respect. It is lodged on a table, in a spacious apartment, in most of their villages. All come and make obeisance to it; and any one qualified may open it, and read aloud a portion of it. The Síkhs are not enjoined to observe many forms or prayers. I observed that generally in the evening they offered up a short orison, which, in conformity to the military complexion thrown over all their acts, they repeated, firmly grasping with both hands their swords, and which concluded with a vociferous invocation to their gúrú for victory, and the extension of the faith. The cattle they employ as food are slaughtered by having their heads severed by a stroke of the sword. They wear the Hindú string, or cord, around their

necks, and use the tasbí, or rosary. They generally style the Supreme Intelligence Sáhib, and call themselves Singhs, or Lions. Those who respectfully address them, salute them as Khâlsajís, or men of the commonwealth.

It was long since foretold, by a celebrated traveller, Mr. Forster, that the Síkhs would become a powerful nation, whenever some enterprising chief should, by the destruction of their numerous petty leaders, unite them under his sole control. We have witnessed the accomplishment of this prediction by Ranjit Singh, and the Síkhs have become an independent and powerful people. The system of numerous distinct but confederated chieftains arose from the patriarchal institution recommended by Nának, who merely directed that his followers should, in any particular crisis, assemble at the holy city of Amritsir. Hence the assumed authority of Ranjit Singh must be considered as an infraction of the fundamental laws of the Síkhs; and although it has been rendered agreeable to the majority of them by their advancement to wealth and command, in consequence of his manifold and splendid conquests, its establishment was long strenuously opposed, and was effected only by the subversion of a multitude of chiefs, attached to the old order of things. Ranjit Singh's policy has led him to make a new creation of chiefs and leaders, selecting them, generally, from the lower classes,

thereby forming a set of men attached to himself; and the new system to which they owe their elevation. That the usurpation of Ranjit Singh has been favourable to the increase of Síkh power no one can doubt; for, anterior to him, so far from having any common object or bond of union sufficient for the preservation of tranquillity amongst them, they were, if not coalesced by the necessity of providing against danger from abroad, perpetually engaged in strife with each other. That the consolidation of their power, and their subjection to authority has improved the state of society with them, is also undeniable, as it has conferred upon them a reputation to sustain, which they did not before enjoy. Time was that a Síkh and a robber were synonymous terms; now, few thefts are heard of, and seldom or ever those wholesale forays, to which the chiefs were once so much addicted. If the predatory propensity still lurk amongst some of them, the restraints of justice prevent its indulgence. At this day the operation of the laws is so effective, that there are few eastern countries in which the solitary traveller can pass with more safety than the Panjâb.

In the reign of Ahmed Shâh, the first Dúraní sovereign, the Síkhs were prodigiously increasing the number of their converts, and were excited by all the frenzy and confidence of aspiring sectaries. That great prince gave it as his opinion, when urged to attempt their control, that it was prudent to de-

fer attack upon them until the fervour of their religious enthusiasm had diminished. Zemân Shâh, in pursuance of his designs upon Hindústân, several times visited the Panjâb, and was extremely anxious to have duly subjected the Síkhs. He seems to have employed both harsh and conciliatory measures, and so far succeeded that the several chiefs, and amongst them Ranjit Singh, who was even then powerful, were prevailed upon to visit Lahore, and pay homage to him. The prince farther conceived (or it was suggested by some of his advisers) the project of making Lahore his capital, an arrangement which, if carried into effect, would have materially changed the train of events, but which was overruled by his principal sirdárs, who would not consent to abandon Khorasân. In one of Zemân Shâh's expeditions Ranjit Singh, with his troops, it is said, sought refuge at Patíála, east of the Satlej, and repaid the Rájá for the asylum granted to him by the seizure of many of his guns and other warlike implements, with which he had before been unprovided. It is commonly asserted in the Panjâb, that the Síkhs became masters of arms and horses by the plunder of the Máhrátta armies, which flying from the pursuit of Lord Lake, entered within their borders. From the deposition of Zemân Shâh, the politics of the Afghâns were too distracted to permit them to interfere with the Síkhs, who finally defeated and slew the Dúrání governor, located at Lahore, and possessed themselves of the city. Ran-

jit Singh, who had received a kind of diploma as chief of the Síkhs from Zemân Shâh, had no ostensible part in this transaction; and, eventually, as I have already related, acquired the city from those who had. The capture of the capital led to the general acknowledgment of his authority, and besides reducing the contumacious of his own sect, he directed his arms against the petty Máhomedan rulers bordering on the Satlej, and always contrived to subdue or to circumvent them.

It is certain, that during the reign of Shâh Sújah the Síkhs called their great military chief, Pádshâh, or king. The expulsion of that Dúrání prince, and the confusion in the countries of the west, presented opportunities of aggrandizement too tempting to be neglected by the Lahore ruler, whose authority at home had become sufficiently established to allow him to direct his attention abroad. Yet, even under these circumstances, he displayed much forbearance and moderation, and it was only after much provocation that he commenced to profit by the anarchy prevalent in the states of the Afghân empire. He possessed himself of Atak and Káshmír, of the provinces of Múltân and of Líya, and constituted the Indus the boundary of his kingdom, while he made tributary the several petty chiefships on the western banks. He also seized Déra Ghází Khân, and Déra Fatí Khân, which had been in a manner evacuated by their owners. While thus employed in the south and west, he was equally industrious and

successful to the north amongst the various independent Hindú states of the hills, subjecting Jamú, and establishing his claims to tribute in Mandéh, &c. He, moreover, obtained the strong hill fort of Kot Kângrah, which he much coveted, from Rájá Sensár Chand of Sújahânpûr, as the price of expelling an army of Gúrkas, that besieged it. On the demise of this Rájá some two years since, he invaded the territory of Sújahânpûr, on the most unjustifiable plea, and annexed it to his own dominion; the son of Sensár Chand seeking an asylum in British Hindústân. Ranjit Singh has, moreover, invaded Bahâwalpúr under pretence, that the khân had assisted his enemy, Shâh Sujah ul-Múlkh; and he has exacted a tribute of nine lákhs of rupees, or one-half of the revenue of the country. The fertile province of Peshâwer has also been devastated by the Máhárâjá, who not only requires an annual tribute of horses, swords, jewels, rice, &c., but sends large bodies of troops to ravage the country, apparently with the view of keeping it depressed. In the same manner his hordes annually visit the Yúsaf Zai districts on the plain, and carry off a tribute in horses. In most cases, if the proportion of tribute be fixed, it is little acted upon, and in the instance of the petty states west of the Indus, is very much dependent upon the will of Harí Singh, Ranjit Singh's commander on the western frontier. At Peshâwer the evil of collection is seriously felt, for ten or fifteen thousand men sometimes march, and destroy

the whole cultivation. The levy of the Bahâwalpúr tribute also calls for the despatch of a large force, which does not, however, pass beyond Milsa, on the northern bank of the Gárra. To the east, Ranjit Singh cannot pass the Satlej without violating his engagements with the British; on all other sides he is at liberty to act, and contemplates the conquest of Sind, from which he has been in the habit of receiving annual presents since his invasion of Bahâwalpúr, when his troops were pushed on to Sabzal Kot, the frontier post of the Sindian territory. Since I was at Lahore, the treachery which put him possession of the Baloch provinces of Hárand and Dájil, has materially advanced the prosecution of his designs, by laying open to him the road to the wealthy city of Shikárpúr. This important acquisition has induced a complete change in the arrangements hitherto adopted as to the conquered states in that quarter. The town and territory of Déra Ghází Khân, before farmed to the khân of Bahâwalpúr, have been resumed, and M. Ventura has been appointed governor, with orders to build a strong fort, evidently intended for a *place d'armes* in the intended operations against Sind. The petty chief of Sang-ghar has been also expelled, and his lands annexed to the government of Múltân.

The revenue of Ranjit Singh, I believe, may be accurately estimated at two and a half crores of rupees, or about two and a half millions sterling.

It is calculated, that after defraying the expenses of his government and army, he is enabled to place in deposit one crore of rupees annually. It is farther believed that he has already in his treasury ten crores of rupees in money; and his various magazines of military arms and stores are annually increased in a certain ratio.

The military force of Ranjit Singh demands attention; and I believe it may be estimated, in round numbers, at seventy thousand men; of whom perhaps twenty thousand are disciplined, after the French and other modes. I do not pretend to speak positively as to the position and numbers of the Síkh troops, but generally speaking the following particulars may be nearly depended upon.

In Káshmír . .	10000	Under orders of Súparsâd, the
With the King .	3000	Brâhman governor.
Karak Singh . .	2000	
Shír Singh . . .	3000	Sons of the king.
Tárah Singh . .	1500	
Rájá Daiyân Singh	5000	Prime Minister.
Harí Singh . .	10000	In command of the frontier on [Indus.
Khúshíâl Singh .	3000	Gúrcherís, generally near the king.
Shâm Singh . .	800	One of the old chiefs.
Fatí Singh . . .	500	In authority towards the Satlej.
Ganda Singh . .	800	Garrison of Múltân.
Officer commanding at Mankírah .	500	In garrison.
Nájíb Regiment .	1000	Ranjit's first raised Battalion.
M. Allard's Cavalry .	3000	1 Regt. Lancers, 2 Regt. Dagrs.
M. Ventura's Infantry	4000	2 Battal. Regt. 1 Regt. Light Infant. & 1 Regt. of Gúrkas.
M. Court's Infantry .	1000	Battalion Regt.
M. Avitabile's Infantry	1000	Battalion Regt.

Regular.	M. Mevius's Infantry	1500	Battalion Regt.
	Mr. Campbell's Cavalry	1200	These officers were dismissed when I was at Lahore: the Regts. Light Cavalry.
	Mr. Garron's Cavalry	600	
	Dowkal Singh's Paltan	1000	Battalion Regt.
	Newly raised Battalion	1000	Under drill.
	Camp of the late M. Amise. Infantry	4000	Battalion Regt. } at present without commander or Europn. Chief.
	Cavalry	2000	Light Cavalry.
	Artillery, reckoning broadly ten men to every gun, and supposing 200 Guns	2000	Principally horse artillery, and now in course of training by M. Allard.
	Allowance for the troops of Rájá Gúláb Singh of Jamú and the several petty Síkh chiefs dispersed over the country, and not otherwise included	10000	
	Total	73400	

The disciplined troops of Ranjit Singh have a highly respectable appearance, are well clothed and equipped, and appear to be in want of no necessaries. Their value in the field remains yet to be ascertained. On the few occasions they have seen service their enemies have not been of a stamp to establish a criterion. The regiments are indiscriminately filled with Mússulmâns and Síkhs, and wear for head-dresses the pagrí of the Panjâb, each regiment adopting a distinguishing colour, as red, blue, green, &c. In other respects they are clothed similarly to the native troops in the British Indian

service. The Gúrkas alone wear caps. As soldiers, the natives of the Panjâb are extremely patient of fatigue, and capable of making prodigious marches with apparent ease; on this point they pride themselves; and they evince not only willingness, but pleasure and mutual emulation in learning military exercises. But they are prone to plunder, and it is invariably their custom at the close of a march to separate from their camp, and to rove over the country for four or five miles, armed with cudgels, and making booty of anything that falls in their way.

As men, physically speaking, the natives of the Panjâb are superior to those of Hindústân Proper. Their limbs are muscular and well proportioned, and they have a stoutness of leg and calf, seldom seen in the Hindústání. Instances of very tall stature may be rare, the general standard being a little above the middle size. The Síkhs are certainly a fine race of men, particularly the better classes. Their females, being seldom permitted to go abroad, I can scarcely speak decidedly concerning them, but the five or six I have by chance met with, would justify the supposition that they are very attractive. They wear extraordinary high conical caps, producing a curious effect, with trowsers. The dress of the men is peculiar, but not inelegant, consisting of the Panjâb pagrí for the head, a vest, or jacket, fitting close to the body and arms, with large, bulky trowsers, terminating

at the knee, the legs from the knee being naked. Chiefs occasionally wear full trowsers, which, however, are recent introductions, and many people remember the time when the Máhárájá and his court could scarcely be said to wear trowsers at all. Over the shoulders, a scarf is usually thrown. Generally speaking, these articles of dress are white. The Síkhs, to their honour, are very cleanly in their linen, in which particular they advantageously differ from their MúsSulmân compatriots. Their scarfs are usually trimmed with a coloured silk border, and sometimes scarlet shawls, or other showy fabrics, are employed. The Síkhs allow the hair of their heads to attain its full growth, and gather it up into a knot at the crown, agreeably to the old Jetic fashion. By pressing it tightly back from the forehead they somewhat elevate the upper part of the face, which imparts a peculiar cast to the countenance.

The Síkhs are almost exclusively a military and agricultural people. They pay much attention to the breeding of horses, and there is scarcely one of them who has not one or more brood mares. Hence, amongst the irregular cavalry—a service to which they are partial—nearly every man's horse is *boná fide* his own property, and even in the regular cavalry a very trifling proportion of the horses belongs to the Máhárájá. It must be confessed that the Síkhs are barbarous, so far as the want of information and intelligence can make

them, yet they have not that savage disposition which makes demons of the rude tribes of the more western countries. They are frank, generous, social, and lively. The cruelties they have practised against the Máhomedans in the countries they have subdued ought not, I think, to be alleged against them as a proof of their ferocity. Heaven knows, the fury of the bigoted Máhomedan is terrible, and the persecuted Síkhs, in their day, were literally hunted like beasts of the field. At present, flushed by a series of victories, they have a zeal and buoyancy of spirit amounting to enthusiasm; and with the power of taking the most exemplary revenge, they have been still more lenient than the Máhomedans were ever towards them. Morality, I believe, is scarcely recognized amongst them, and chastity, I have been told, is neither observed nor expected to be observed by their females. It is no unusual arrangement for the many brothers of a family to have a wife in common; and I have known the soldiers of M. Allard request permission to visit their homes, alleging that their brothers had gone on a journey, and their wives were alone. The plea was considered a good one. Such customs must not be imputable to them as Síkhs, they are rather the remains of an ancient and rude state of society. It must also be observed, that trespasses on the rules of decency must be made by themselves, and amongst themselves; liberties taken by strangers

would be held as crimes, and resented accordingly. Should the Síkhs continue an independent nation, it may be supposed that increased civilization will gradually remove these traces of barbarism. Though professed converters, they are perfectly tolerant, and though singular in some of their usages, they never require others to imitate them. On the whole, having seen the turbulent tribes of Khorasân, and the milder races of Sind and Bahâwalpúr, I was pleased with the Síkhs, and could believe that, when in course of time they grow a little more enlightened, they will become a superior people.

The Síkh irregular cavalry have a peculiar exercise, at which they are very expert. In action, their reliance is not so much upon the charge, as upon a desultory species of warfare, to which they are well trained. It consists in advancing upon their enemies until their matchlocks can take effect, discharging them, and precipitately retreating to reload, and to repeat the same manœuvre. They are considered good shots; and their plan has generally answered, but they have had to encounter no opponents provided with strong divisions of artillery. Yet it must not be forgotten, that in two or three actions with the Afghâns, when these latter thought fit to fight, the Síkhs have been unable to withstand the fury of the Dúrání charge.

There is amongst the Síkhs a class of military fanatics, called Akâlías, who clothe themselves in

black, and are always armed in a most profuse manner. Some of them have half a dozen swords stuck about them and their horses, and as many pistols, and other arms. They carry round the top of their pagrí a circular steel disc, with a rim, perhaps an inch broad, the edge of which is very sharp. I, at first, supposed this instrument was intended to break the cut of a sword, but learned that it was an offensive weapon, thrown by the hand; and I was assured that these men could eject it with such force that they could divide the leg of a horse, or even of an elephant.

The pay of the troops, provided for by jághírs, or the assignment of lands, is, of course, very variable. That of the regular infantry, is said to be one rupee higher to the private soldier than in the British service. The pay of the officers in the regular battalions is also fixed, but still fluctuates, as those made by the Máhárájá himself receive extravagant allowances, while those promoted by the commanding officers receive only the regulated stipend. The troops are not paid with punctuality, but they are certain of receiving all arrears once during the year. The Síkhs are allowed every year the indulgence of leave for three months, to visit their homes. They return at the annual festival of Dassérah, when the Máháràja reviews the assembled force of his kingdom. Amritsir is usually the spot selected for this review. The Síkhs, being permitted the free use of wine,

it is much to their credit that during the nine months they are present with their regiments the greater part of them abstain from it, and make up for their forbearance during the revelry of the liberty season.

Ranjit Singh is the son of Máhá Singh, and was born at Gújarânwâla, a small town about sixty miles west of Lahore. In his early infancy he manifested a predilection for war, and all his amusements had reference to that art. Such was the barbarism of the Síkhs at that period, that the young son of a chief was not taught to read or to write, accomplishments which he has never since acquired. On the demise of his father, being yet a minor, his mother assumed the authority; but suspecting that she intended to keep his patrimony from him, he slew her, and by so terrific a deed acquired the government of his native town, and the command of two thousand horse. From that moment he commenced his plans of aggrandizement. It was one of his first objects to raise a disciplined regiment of foreigners, a singular proof of sagacity, in a country where every one was a horseman. This regiment, his present Najíb Paltan, was of eminent service to him, and now enjoys many privileges. He was some years employed in the reduction of his own countrymen, and finally, by taking advantage of the disorders in Afghânistân, has become a powerful prince; and the only absolutely independent one in what

may be termed Hindústân. Ranjit Singh owes his elevation to his own ability and energy, favoured by the concurring circumstances of the times. He has always been his own counsellor; and at present, surrounded with officers and ministers, he takes no opinion on important state affairs. As a general, setting aside his good fortune, he has exhibited decisive proofs of great personal valour, quickness of conception, and promptitude of execution. He exemplified in the investment of Múltân an acquaintance with stratagem, and in the siege of Mankírah remarkable perseverance, and a possession of resources to meet difficulties, that would have done honour to any general. In his campaigns on the Indus his achievements were of the most brilliant kind, and no commander could have surpassed him in the beauty and celerity of his movements. In his relation with his troops he appears to great advantage, enjoying the general esteem, which his kindness and liberality have secured. Not a day passes without thousands of fervent aspirations for the continuance of his life. He is equally popular with the generality of his subjects, and rules with an equal hand both Mússulmân and Hindú. The only hardship of which the former complains is the interdiction of azân, or summons to prayers. His devastation of countries, on their subjection—a measure seemingly injurious to his own interests—does not originate so much in cruelty as

in obedience to a barbarous system of warfare, long established in these countries.

The annual visits to Pesháwer, and other dependent states, are evidently made with the political view of keeping them depressed, and of preventing the possibility of reaction. Although himself illiterate, he has a respect for acquirements in others, and when occasion presented itself, during his first visit to Pesháwer, of showing his esteem for literature, he did not neglect it, and issued positive orders for the preservation of the extensive library of the Músulmân saint at Chamkanní. He must be deemed charitable, if we may judge from the large sums daily lavished upon fáquírs and others, and his bounty extends to the Máhomedan as well as the Hindú. He is undoubtedly gifted with liberality of mind, as evinced in his deportment to his Máhomedan subjects, who are admitted to all posts and ranks. His confidential physician is fáquír Azzíz-al-Dín, and no man perhaps is more trusted by him. Although he has elevated some of his menial servants to the highest commands in the state, it must be admitted that they have proved men of high merit, as Harí Singh, Khúshíâl Singh, and others. The former of these was, however, a towns-fellow, and playmate of the Máhárájá in his childhood; and the prince has not a more devoted subject or a more intrepid general. Mír Dhaiyân Singh, it is said, was found a stripling in the jangal on some ra-

raging expedition; his personal attractions pleased the Máhárájá; and his subservience to his impure desires has effected his promotion to the dignity of minister and rájá, and the advancement of all his family. He has not proved deficient in talent, although much so in moral excellence, unless he be belied. Mír Dhaiyân Singh has two brothers, Gúláb Singh and Súchít Singh; both have been created rájás; and Gúláb Singh, as governor of Jamú, possesses very great power. Súchít Singh, it is asserted, was once as much a favourite of the Máhárájá as his brother, Dhaiyân Singh. These three brothers, called the Rajás, have been raised to more influence than perhaps is agreeable to Ranjit Singh, but it was his own act; and however repentant, he scruples to acknowledge his error by degrading them. Yet it is popularly believed, that if he could get them together he would not hesitate to seize them; but they, aware of the probability of such an accident, take care never to attend the court at the same time.

Ranjit Singh has but one son, Karak Singh, who is considered legitimate, or who is believed by himself to be so, according to report. This prince has proved incapable of command; and his father has been obliged to remove most of the troops he placed under him, owing to the disorders his son permitted, or was unable to control. He is esteemed imbecile, but, I suspect, is merely of a mild, placid disposition, averse to cruelty as to

exertion. He has frequently remonstrated against the violent measures of his father, particularly against the occupation of Sújahânpúr, with the young rájá of which he had contracted friendship by the exchange of turbans. Rájá Dhaiyân Singh, it is said, presumed to intrigue with his wife, an injury which might have passed over unnoticed by him, but was resented by Shír Singh, who castigated the offender in open darbár. Karak Singh has a young son, Noh Níhâl Singh, of whom Ranjit Singh, and the Síkhs generally, entertain great hopes and high expectations.

Shír Singh is the son of one of Ranjit Singh's wives, whom he married for political purposes, and whose turbulent spirit has occasioned him much trouble. In his cups, the Máhárájá declares her offspring to be due to some dhobí, or washerman. The young man has, however, merit, which procures his being treated with respect. He is brave and generous, and very popular with the soldiery. He attaches himself a good deal to the French officers, and to Europeans generally; and many people, looking at the incapacity of Karak Singh, consider his prospects favourable; but he is extremely dissipated.

Besides these, there are three others, Tárrah Singh, Peshávar Singh, and Káshmírí Singh; by universal opinion pronounced supposititious, the sons of various females, whose fortune has located them in the Máhárájá's háram. By the little notice he

takes of them, the prince plainly shows that he coincides with the public sentiment.

It is already foreseen, even by the Síkhs, that the succession will be disputed; and the death of Ranjit Singh will, inevitably, involve the Panjâb in all the horrors of anarchy. In person, the Máhárájá is a little below the middle size, and very meagre. His complexion is fair, and his features regular, with an aquiline nose. He carries a long white beard, and wants the left eye. Though apparently far advanced in years, I believe he has not completed fifty. On the right side of his neck a large scar is visible, probably the effect of a wound. In his diet he is represented to be abstemious, but has always been perniciously prone to copious cups of the strongest spirits, which, with his unbounded sensuality, has brought on him premature old age, with a serious burthen of infirmities: for some ailment, he makes daily use of laudanum. Simple in his dress, which is of white linen, he wears on his arm the celebrated diamond Koh-í-Núr, of which he deprived Shâh Sújâh al Múlkh, who had promised it to him, but first attempted to dupe him, and then to withhold it altogether. His attendants, domestics, &c. are splendidly clad, and display a profusion of gold and jewelled ornaments. Although Ranjit Singh, in his relations with the Mússulmâns to the west, assumes a high tone, at home he simply styles himself Sirkár. In his affairs with the Afghâns

he has always received ample provocation; and the shameless deceit and perfidy, constantly played off upon him by their short-sighted and unprincipled chiefs and politicians, deserved the vengeance he has inflicted upon them.

To sum up his character as a public man, he is a prince of consummate ability, a warrior brave and skilful, and a good, but crafty statesman. In his private or individual capacity, he has many shining qualities; but they are obscured by many failings, and by habits so grossly sensual that they can scarcely be excused by the knowledge that they may be attributed to the barbarous period at which he was born, or by the fact that in such respect he is not worse than many of his compatriots. If there be a prince of antiquity to whom he may be compared, I think it might be Philip of Macedon; both claim our admiration as public characters, and our censure as private men. On a review, however, of their actions, their means, and advantages of birth, it may be conceded that the more splendid career has been run by the conqueror of the Panjâb.

CHAPTER XX.

Decline to see the Máhárájá.—Service of the Máhárájá.—Routes from Lahore.—Síkh females.—Baloches.—Meeting with Thákúr Singh.—Síkh villages.—Thâkúr Singh.—His bright expectations.—Mission of Thákúr Singh.—His party.—State of country.—Occupations of Thákúr Singh.—His darbárs.—His attentions.—Harípah.—Tradition.—Local features of Harípah.—Identity with those of Arrian's Sangala.—Site of Alexander's altars.—Euthydemia.—Distressed by gnats.—Night march.—Chícha Watní.—Túlúmba.—Ancient fortress.—Conjectures thereon.—Kindness of Thákúr Síngh.—The Kattí.—Patán víllages.—Sketches lost.—Take leave of Thákúr Singh.—Re-meeting at Peshâwer.—Friendly Mogal.—Fázilpúr.—Mír Mobârak.—Fatí Máhomed Ghorí—His salutation.—Shikárpúr.—The evil eye.—Nazzar Máhomed.—Ladkhâna.—Maihota.—Séhwan.—Kotlí.—Haidarabád.—Fort—Antiquity.—Rulers of Sind.—Revenue and military force.—Mír Ismael Shâh—His reputation and diplomatic talent.—Anecdote of Mr. Hankey Smith's mission.—Mír Ismael Shâh's dilemma.—His means of extricating himself—His dexterity and increased repute.—Residence at Haidarabád.—Determination.—Leave Haidarabád.—Fray.—Tatta.—Modern history.—Decline in trade.—Country between Tatta and Karáchí.—Landís.—Adventures on the road.—Pâlí opium kâfila.—Karáchí.—Port.—Castle of Manároh.—Port of Alexander.

The Máhárájá was at Lahore when I arrived, but soon departed for Amratsir, to celebrate the annual festival of the Dassérah; on which occasion he re-

views the collective force of his kingdom, being exceedingly fond of military display. He did not return until the close of the rainy season, and I declined the honour of an interview with him—which General Allard was willing to have brought about—as I did not purpose to remain; and I was aware that if by chance the Máhárájá should be pleased with me, he would propose, in course, that I should engage in his service. The general had wished that I should have made a sketch of Lahore, for presentation to the Máhárájá, as, he observed, that it was necessary to amuse, as well as to be useful to him; but I did not do so for the reasons just stated.

I could plainly see that the Máhárájá's service, however lucrative, had disadvantages; and not the least of them, in my opinion, was that of being compelled to minister to the gratification of his caprice and vanity, or to become the instrument of his vengeance and exactions. Even General Allard condescended to serve the Máhárájá's views in such respects, and while I was there had in charge two Brâhman prisoners, who were most ignominiously treated, and tortured with thumb-screws, under the notion of forcing them to disgorge the wealth they were accused of having amassed in Káshmír. The men may have been guilty; but I grieved to hear that their religious prejudices as to food had been purposely violated, and to witness them occupied, under terror of the bayonet, in the degrading labour

of bringing baskets of earth on their heads into the general's gardens.

If I left Lahore with regret, after the favours I had received, I was glad to escape from the oppressive heat, and the plague of flies, more annoying there than at any place I remember to have seen. I had the choice of dropping down the Râví in boats, or of taking the land route on the eastern bank of the river, by Sâtgharra and Túlúmba; the direct one by Saiyadwâla, which I had before travelled, being impassable from rains and inundations. I preferred the land route, and from Lahore rode, —for I had purchased a small horse—to Níázpúr. Here one Júár Singh, a Síkh, took me to the daramsâla, and my horse to his own dwelling. As I followed him through the village I had an opportunity of seeing many of the Síkh females, who not expecting an intruder, were taken by surprise, and had not time to conceal themselves. They were generally very well-looking. Júár Singh furnished my repast, and in the morning refused an equivalent.

To Mangah, five cosses distant, there was excellent pasture land; and on the road I was overtaken by a respectable Máhomedan party of mounted Baloches, natives of Mangah. They were gaily attired, with silken shawls, of gaudy colours, loosely bound round their heads, while their glossy black hair, in luxuriant ringlets, and duly oiled, depended upon their shoulders. About two cosses beyond Mangah

I found a walled-in village, where I put up at a takía. Two or three Síkh villagers had tendered their hospitable offices, when a person arrived with a message from Thákúr Síngh, a young Síkh sirdár, encamped near the village. I went to him, and was most civilly received by a handsome intelligent youth, apparently sixteen or seventeen years of age; and, as he was going to Múltân, it was instantly agreed that we should be companions for the journey. I left him, promising to be ready in the morning when he and his cavalcade marched. During the night a heavy shower of rain fell and disquieted me, as I had no place of shelter, and my effects were completely soaked. In the morning, proceeding towards the Síkh camp, I fell in with a servant of the sirdár, whom I accompanied in advance, but learned, afterwards, that the party was behind. We passed a variety of villages, principally inhabited by Síkhs; and in all of them were substantial brick houses. They had generally small bazars, and around them, more or less, cultivated land; yet the whole country was essentially a grazing one. There is no Síkh family that has not a brood mare or two, and the number of horned cattle was extraordinary. Over the jangal bushes and trees I was pleased to observe, twining and in bloom, the convolvulus major. The Síkhs as we passed along were evidently disposed to be merry at my expense; a Feringhí, for the first time seen amongst them, being naturally considered a *rara avis;* and I had reason to

congratulate myself that I was in company sufficient to restrain their propensity to mirth. To their honour, it must be allowed, that their villages are particularly clean, and a certain quietude reigns amongst them, which causes the traveller to regret that he passes them so quickly. On reaching the spot intended for encampment, at some distance from a village, we were soon joined by Thákúr Singh and his party. My nag was directed to be placed in line with his own horses, and to be taken equal care of, while, I was informed, that I should not be permitted to incur any expense, however trifling, during my stay in the camp. The sirdár was son to Shâm Singh, one of the few old Síkh chiefs not absolutely pauperized by Ranjit Singh, It was said that the father of Shâm Singh, by name Níhâl Singh, was warlike and powerful, and that Ranjit Singh fearing him, courted his friendship. On his demise, however, the Máhárájá alienated much of the family property, Shâm Singh being of milder disposition, and therefore less respected. He, nevertheless, enjoys a revenue of three lákhs of rupees, from a tract of country between Lahore and Jamú, and keeps in pay about eight hundred followers, chiefly horsemen. It was now contemplated by Ranjit Singh to unite his grandson, Noh Níhâl Singh, (son of Karak Singh,) with the daughter of Shâm Singh. Such an alliance induced flattering expectations, Noh Níhâl Singh being presumptive heir to the Síkh throne. This union did eventually

ensue, but was dissolved on earth by the death of the young Noh Níhâl, occasioned by one of the most surprising accidents it has been the fate of the Síkhs to witness.

At this time, Thákúr Singh was proceeding to arrange differences which had arisen between the Súbahdár Sohand Mall and the Khân of Bahâwalpúr. He was accompanied by his uncle, Khúshâl Singh, a highly respectable old chief, and, besides his personal attendants and múnshís, had about one hundred and fifty horsemen, a small field-piece drawn by bullocks, and six camels carrying swivels. Amongst his followers were a band of musicians, two falconers, and a Brâhman, who daily performed some mystic rites connected with his superstitions. One of his múnshís, Haiyát Khân, a well-informed Máhomedan, was directed to see that I needed nothing, as he was supposed to be best acquainted with European habits, and on that account was accustomed to transact business with the French officers at Lahore.

We made three or four marches, usually of eight or ten cosses each, passing numerous villages with Síkh castles and towers, the largest of which was Sâtgharra (the Seven Castles), the country abounding in pasture, and the jangal more or less wooded. Besides dwarf tamarisks and mimosas, bér and pípal trees only occurred in number, two or three cypress trees being observed near villages. We always

halted at some distance from the villages; and a grove of pípals was generally selected, the shade thereof obviating the necessity for erecting tents. This tract of country was held in jághír by Rájá Mír Dhaiyân Singh.

On reaching our encampments Thákúr Singh always repeated some prayer over a basin of warmed ghee, produced by the Brâhman, who alike mumbled something, and at the conclusion dropped into the fluid a pais, or piece of copper money. He was extremely inquisitive on all points connected with Europeans; and during my stay with him I enabled him to arrange a voluminous vocabulary of the English language; he in turn teaching me his Gúrús alphabet. I was surprised at his acquaintance with Christian tenets, which I found he had acquired from tracts, translated into the dialects of the Panjâb; and he one day asked for an explanation of that portion of the discourse on the mount in which it is stated, "If an eye offend thee, pluck it out," &c. In the evenings a darbár was held, at which the soldiers presented themselves, and saluted with the customary Síkh exclamation of "Wâh! Wâh! Gúrú-jí! Fatteh!" or "Bravo! bravo! oh, Gúrú! victory!" Amongst these were one or two of the fanatic Akâlías, or immortals, distinguished by their dark dresses, and a peculiar energy of manner and expression. At these darbárs Thákúr Singh always placed me on the same seat with himself and uncle,

and held my hand within his, so assiduous was he to show attention, and so politely did he acquit himself.

When the periods of repast arrived, the viands, &c. intended for me were placed separately on a kind of tray, and submitted to the young sirdár's inspection, that he might see no delicacy was omitted which his travelling stores contained, or which could be procured in the neighbouring villages.

A long march preceded our arrival at Harípah, through jangal of the closest description. East of the village was an abundance of luxuriant grass, where, along with many others, I went to allow my nag to graze. When I joined the camp I found it in front of the village and ruinous brick castle. Behind us was a large circular mound, or eminence, and to the west was an irregular rocky height, crowned with remains of buildings, in fragments of walls, with niches, after the eastern manner. The latter elevation was undoubtedly a natural object; the former being of earth only, was obviously an artificial one. I examined the remains on the height, and found two circular perforated stones, affirmed to have been used as bangles, or arm-rings, by a fáquír of renown. He has also credit for having subsisted on earth, and other unusual substances, and his depraved appetite is instanced in testimony of his sanctity. The entire neighbourhood is embellished with numerous pípal trees, some of them in the last stage of lingering exis-

tence; bespeaking a great antiquity, when we remember their longevity. The walls and towers of the castle are remarkably high, though, from having been long deserted, they exhibit in some parts the ravages of time and decay. Between our camp and it extended a deep trench, now overgrown with grass and plants. Tradition affirms the existence here of a city, so considerable that it extended to Chicha Wâtní, thirteen cosses distant, and that it was destroyed by a particular visitation of Providence, brought down by the lust and crimes of the sovereign.

We were cautioned by the inhabitants, that on the plain we were likely to be assailed by makkahs, or stinging-gnats; and in the evening we ascended the circular mound behind us. There was ample room on the summit to receive the party and horses belonging to it. It was impossible to survey the scene before us, and to look upon the ground on which we stood, without perceiving that every condition of Arrian's Sangala was here fulfilled,—the brick fortress, with a lake, or rather swamp, at the north-eastern angle; the mound, protected by a triple row of chariots, and defended by the Kathí before they suffered themselves to be shut up within their walls; and the trench between the mound and fortress, by which the circumvallation of the place was completed, and whence engines were directed against it. The data of Arrian are very minute, and can scarcely be misapplied to Harípah, the

position of which also perfectly coincides with what, from inference, we must assign to Sangala. I have made public my convictions on this point, but repeat them, as I doubt not they are just; and the identification of Sangala gives a point from which we may safely calculate upon the site of the celebrated altars of Alexander, which, in all probability, were in the neighbourhood of Pâk Pattan, on the Satlej, two marches from Harípah, Alexander having there gained the high road into India, which was afterwards followed by Taimúr.

The verification of the site of Sangala is farther important, because, subsequent to its destruction by the Macedonian leader, it again rose into consequence under the name of Euthydemia, clearly referring to a renowned king of Bactria, and which change in its fortunes is supposed to be owing to one of his sons; and we know of no other than Demetrius.

Our precautions were vain against the swarms of our tiny antagonists, the gnats, and at sunset they so annoyed us, and particularly the horses, which became absolutely frantic, that we had no alternative but to decamp, and march throughout the night.

Towards two or three o'clock in the morning we reached the small village of Chicha Watní, seated on the Râví. Our entire course had been through close jangal, in many parts under water, and just before reaching the village, part of the company, with whom I had preceded the rest, came upon a

small arm or cut from the river, which we crossed on horseback, the depth of the water barely permitting us. On this occasion, on attempting to ascend the further bank my horse fell back with me into the water, and besides being myself well ducked, my saddle-bags were completely soaked. We had mistaken the road, as Thákúr Singh, who followed it, avoided this obstacle. At this village we missed the pípal groves and occupied houses. The inhabitants were chiefly Máhomedans; and there were two Síkhs stationed, as we afterwards found was the case in every Máhomedan village. There was a large ferry-boat here, in which, in company with Thákúr Singh and his band of musicians, we were rowed up and down the river in the evening. Some of the men took idle shots at alligators basking freely on the banks.

From Chicha Watní we made a long march of fifteen cosses, once touching on the river, through jangal less close and drier. Another march brought us to the neighbourhood of Túlúmba, surrounded with groves of date-trees, and, to appearance, a large, populous and walled-in town. I did not visit it, for although we stayed three or four days in its neighbourhood, I fell sick. Close to our camp was, however, the ruins of a mud fortress, with walls and towers unusually high and thick. I cannot call to mind the name it bears. It was considered so extraordinary, that Thákúr Singh, with all his Síkhs, went to inspect it, and I, being then well, accompanied

them. It needed not the murmurs of tradition to assert its antiquity, and must have been in the ancient time a remarkably strong fortress. Like Harípah, its destruction is ascribed to the crimes of its rulers.

If my view of the operations of Alexander in this part of the country be correct, Túlúmba represents the capital of the Mallí, which could not have been Múltân, even though its name be rightly Mállísthân, as that only tends to prove that it was one of the confederated towns, which may be readily granted without admitting that it was the principal. There is a chance that in the old mud fortress we have the remains of the fort held by Brâhmans, whose defence was so obstinate, and so fatal to themselves, and which was evidently immediately contiguous to the capital of the Mallí.

I made the first march from Túlúmba on horseback, but grew so unwell, that the second I was accommodated in the state-carriage, drawn by two fine horses, belonging to Thákúr Singh; and so obliging was the young sirdár, that he made it a point to be my companion during the latter half of the journeys we made. In this manner we reached Múltân, and encamped near the zíárat of Shams Tábrézí. Between Chicha Watní and Túlúmba, and from the latter place towards Múltân the country is inhabited by the Kattí tribes, apparently the descendants of Alexander's determined opponents. They are a pastoral people, dwelling

in temporary villages, and keep amazingly numerous herds of horned cattle. For every head of cattle they pay a tax of one rupee to the government. They traffic largely in ghee; but although they are rich in rural wealth, they have not the most honest or peaceable reputation. As Múltân is neared, the soil, which from Túlúmba had become light and sandy in a degree, is now decidedly so, and fixed villages again commence. In each of them is a square tower, the indication of former Patán rule. Near these villages the pípal is generally superseded by the ghaz, or tamarisk, which attains an enormous growth, but yields an insufficient shade.

We remained many days at Múltân; but my disorder, a bilious fever, grew upon me, and I was little able to enjoy, or to benefit by my stay. I had made a sketch of the town, which showing to Haiyât Khân, he conveyed it to Thákúr Singh, who smiled, and said, I was sent by the Sahib loghs to take sketches of the country. It was returned at the time, but at night was taken from under my pillow. When at Harípah I had also sketched the old fort. The paper was handed from one to the other, and I have now to regret its loss.

At length Thákúr Singh continued his march to Sújah Kot, and encamped in the garden of Mozafar Khân. I remained many days with him, and ridded myself of the fever, which, nevertheless, left me extremely weak; on which account he wished me to prolong my stay, but I was anxious

to proceed. With difficulty I procured his consent, and took leave of him and his uncle, having received the most friendly attention while in their camp. Thákúr Singh had even purposed to have presented me with a sum of money, and Khúshâl Singh had approved of it. It was not offered, because I had told Haiyát Khân, in the most positive manner, that I would not accept it. He had also frequently wished me to remain with him altogether, as far as I could judge, with sincerity, stating, that he could not be so munificent as the Great Sirkár, (Ranjit Singh,) but that he could give one thousand rupees per month, and when the marriage of his sister took place he might be able to do more.

I often remembered Thákúr Singh and his kindnesses; but years had elapsed, when at Pesháwer, in 1838, I had again the pleasure to meet him. He was as friendly as ever; we exchanged presents of horses; but I departed without bidding him farewell; an omission occasioned, and I trust to be excused, by the knowledge that he had prepared a costly parting present, which I did not choose to accept.

Once more alone, I reached Pír Jelâlpúr, and thence proceeded to Uch. From which place, on the road to Allahabád, I missed my way, an accident which led me to a village, Gúgújarwâla, where the principal, a Mogal, as he said, by descent, treated me handsomely, and detained me a day

to feast on venison. Thence I passed on to Allahabád, and by the road I had before travelled to Fázilpúr, where I remained a few days with Ráhmat Khân and his party. On leaving I took one of his men to accompany me to Khairpúr, because I was aware, from what I had before seen of the administration in Sind, that, being mounted and a stranger, I should be searched at every post where government officers were stationed, and that altercation might arise, unless I had some one to explain. I arrived at Rohrí without any serious interruption, and found Mír Mobárak, a son of Mír Sohráb, about to take boat for Haidarabád. One of his suite accosted me, and, finding that I was going there, spoke, untold by me, to the Mír, and obtained his consent that I should take my place in the boats. The Mír departed, amid the benedictions of his brothers and crowds assembled on the banks, but when I was about to put my horse into one of the boats, it was objected that the animal could not be received, although I might go if I pleased. I would not assent to this arrangement, and therefore proceeded to Khairpúr, where I now stayed a few days, the guest of Fatí Máhomed Ghorí, who, while he took no notice of me when I was there before, did not think me unworthy of his civilities when I did not need them. I went to visit my old friend Múlla Háfíz, when Fatí Máhomed observed me, and beckoning me to him, he said, "Why not come and stay at

my house, where you and your horse shall be taken care of. Feringhís, when they pass through Khairpúr, always put up with me." After a few days, in which I learned that the direct route from Khairpúr to Haidarabád was perilous at the point where the frontiers of the two territories unite, from the feuds of the border tribes, encouraged, perhaps, by the policy of the mírs themselves, I adopted the suggestion of going to Ladkhâna, with the expectation of finding there Afghân merchants, with whom I might drop down the river. I did not take the nearest road, but returned to Rohrí, and there crossing the river, passed on to Shikárpúr, where I stayed again a few days. I was received by an Afghân in the service of Kâsim Shâh, and lodged in the house with his family. One of his neighbours, an Afghân, I believe, also, either had, or pretended to have, a great dread of me, for a reason I had never before heard advanced; viz. that as a Feringhí, I possessed an evil eye, and could at pleasure bewitch his wife and his daughter. My host treated the allegation with ridicule, though his neighbour insisted that he was right, and cited book authorities; and the affair only ceased when the former threatened to consider such an injurious suspicion as an insult to himself.

Ladkhâna, or Lárkhâna, was twenty-one cosses from Shikárpúr, and as the road leads through jangal, and is unsafe, my Afghân and his brother accompanied me. We passed a night at a village

on the road, and immediately preceding the town crossed a large canal, on which it is situated. My horse, never a very good one, had become of little use to me, and I parted with him to the Afghâns for a trifling consideration, having met with, as I expected, a fruit merchant of Kâbal, Nazzar Máhomed, who brings annually supplies for the Haidarabád Amírs. A government boat was waiting for him and his party at the bandar, or river station, and he was agreeable that I should avail myself of it.

Ladkhâna was a large, populous, and commercial town, the bazars exhibiting great activity. It was governed by the Nawâb Walí Máhomed, of the Líghárí, a Baloch tribe, who is styled the Vazír of Sind. He is very popular, and his sway is mild. In company with Nazzar Máhomed, I started for the bandar, six or seven cosses distant, but we missed our road, and were wandering nearly throughout the day. We crossed the Nárí, a cut or branch of the Indus, which, with a singularly irregular course, winds through the beautiful country west of the main river to Séhwan, where it rejoins, after forming the lake Manchúr. On the banks of the Nárí, near Ladkhâna, are the remains of an ancient fortress, on a huge mound, called Maihota, a name not unknown to the ancient inhabitants of our isle, being yet preserved by an ancient castle in the northern counties, or in Scotland.

On gaining the bandar we found the boat

waiting, and thence we quietly floated down the river, once or twice touching on sand-banks in our course. Opposite Séhwan we halted, that the party might visit the celebrated shrine of Lâll Shâh Báz, and I accompanied them, that I might see the town and old castle adjacent to it. The site was plainly an ancient one, if we may not accede to the popular belief that it was founded by Shísh paigambar, or the inspired patriarch Seth.

From Séhwan we pleasantly descended to Haidarabad, with the Lakkí hills on our right. The bandar, or boat station, is, indeed, three miles distant from the town, and there is a small village at it, while on the opposite bank is the larger one of Kotlí, belonging to Ahmed Khân, chief of the Búlfút, a Lúmri tribe.

Haidarabád is built on a low calcareous elevation, stretching at first north and south, the direction of the buildings, and then sweeping round towards the river, where it is surmounted with several large tombs of Gúlám Shâh, Kalorah, Mír Kerím Alí, and others of the past and reigning dynasties. The houses are meanly constructed of mud, and the bazar forms one long street, the entire length of the town. A good deal of commerce is obviously carried on, and towards evening, when the Hindús assemble, there is much bustle, and it may be supposed much business transacted. At the southern extremity of the town is the fort, a large irregular building, with lofty walls and towers conforming to

the outlines of the scarped eminence on which they stand. It is built of kiln-burnt bricks, and, with its various lines of loop-holes, has a singular and interesting appearance. The several Amírs have their residences within it, and strangers are not permitted to enter. The ancient name of the fortress was, I believe, Nirang, but the town is probably of more recent date. As the capital of Lower Sind it became distinguished under the later Kalorah princes, the earlier ones residing at Khodâbád, whose remains now exist north of Séhwan. The last sole prince of Sind was Gúlám Nabbí, Kalorah, a Jet family, claiming descent from the Abbássíde caliphs. He and his family were dispossessed by their sirdárs of the Tâlpúrí, a Baloch tribe, whose descendants now reign. There were at this time at Haidarabád, the Amír Morád Alí, his sons, Núr Máhomed, and Nassír Khân, the Amírs Sohabdár and Mír Máhomed. Morád Alí is the principal, and may be said to govern the country, although all of them have shares in it, and Amír Sohabdár, his nephew, is somewhat contumacious. Morád Alí is not beloved, and in no country is oppression more generally complained of than in Sind; but, although I resided three or four months at Haidarabád, I never witnessed or heard of any cruelties or exactions practised there; on the contrary, there was perfect freedom and security of persons and property.

If I inquired as to the revenue and military force,

I was told exaggerated stories of a crore of rupees, and a lákh of bandúks, or firelocks, with Baloches, to use them—complete fire-eaters. I never saw any thing in the shape of troops, save the few mounted attendants who accompanied the amírs on their hunting excursions. I observed, indeed, that nearly every male at Haidarabád was a núkar, or servant, receiving certain allowances in grain and money, but never attending darbár, and engaged in ordinary trades and occupations. There are, however, many sirdárs who must have followers, and the Baloch tribes hold their jághírs on condition of military service. Of their quotas the Sindian armies may be composed, but I understood it was ruinously expensive to draw them out, as in that event the amírs, who at other times treat them most niggardly, are obliged to be equally lavish, so that it is cheaper for them to buy off an enemy, than to collect their hordes to repel him.

I was introduced to Mír Ismael Shâh, a Shíá saiyad, of Shíráz family, and living in distinction at Haidarabád. In the confidence of Morad Alí and his sons, he was usually employed in embassies of importance, and had been deputed to the Vazír Fatí Khân, in Khorasân, and to the government of Bombay. He had a reputation for ability; and, as a proof of his "onar," or dexterity, an anecdote was related to me, which threw light on the insult offered to the British mission under Mr. Hankey Smith, at Tátta. It appears, Mír Ismael

Shâh had been sent elchí, or ambassador, to Bombay, where he was allowed five thousand rupees monthly, provided with a handsome house and carriage, and otherwise so highly honoured that, after his business, if he had any, was concluded, he slighted the intimations made to him from time to time that he might return, very naturally desiring to profit, as long as he could, by British munificence. It had, however, been proposed, that a mission should accompany him on his return, in acknowledgment of the politeness of the amírs; and, as these important chiefs declined to treat with the subordinate government of Bombay, it was got up by the supreme government of Calcutta, in deference to the scruples of their highnesses. The amírs had no wish to receive a mission at all; and, not supposing that the supreme government would condescend to despatch one, had raised objections, under the hope of saving themselves from its infliction. Mír Ismael Shâh found himself in a dilemma, as, the better to ingratiate himself with his English friends, he had been representing that the mission was just the thing desired by the amírs; while, to them he had been writing, he had done all he could to prevent it. After a variety of delays on the part of Mír Ismael Shâh, he was at last informed that a vessel was ready to convey him to Karáchí; and, sore against his will, he was compelled to leave Bombay to prepare for the reception of the mission, and to excuse

himself to the amírs for having brought the visitation upon them. The mission, in due time, also arrived at Karáchí, and their old friend, Mír Ismael, was ready to receive them as Mihmândár. He wrote to his masters, that the Feringhís were very elate, and it was necessary to humble their pride; and he particularly noted the circumstance of hoisting the British flag, suggesting, that at Tátta, Walí Máhomed, Lígharí, should be sent with a force to strike it, after which the humiliated mission might be allowed to proceed to Haidarabád, as their pretensions would be lowered with their standard. The amírs were shocked at so bold a proposal, and were disposed to reject it as too hazardous, being fearful it might cause the return of the mission, and lead to war; but they were overruled by Mír Ismael Shâh, who pledged himself to provide against the return of the mission, and any evil results from the act he recommended. At Tátta, therefore, while the mission was encamped, Walí Máhomed, with a large party of horse, dashed unexpectedly amongst the tents, cut their ropes, and those of the flag-staff. The escort turned out, and a few lives were lost; but the object had been gained. The gentlemen of the mission were, of course, indignant, and talked of retracing their steps; but Mír Ismael Shâh was at hand to explain that the assault was the deed of the wild Baloches of the jangal, and committed without the cognizance of the amírs. Nor had he mistaken his powers

of persuasion: such excuses were accepted. He had cleared himself of the suspicion of having brought the mission, and obtained great credit for having so dexterously managed the delicate affair.

Mír Ismael Shâh was very courteous to me, and offered me money if I needed it, and then to introduce me to the amírs; but I declined so much honour, having nothing to say to them. In course of conversation he talked so indulgently of swine-flesh, that I fancied, while at Bombay, he might have gratified curiosity at the expense of his Máhomedan prejudices.

I resided at Haidarabád in the house of Mírza Khúrbân Alí, a Mogal, in the service of Amír Nassír Khân; and so cheap was subsistence that I did not expend more than three rupees, or about five shillings monthly. It being winter, the climate was also cool and agreeable, and, on the whole, I passed my time pleasantly. The month of Rámazân again occurred; and reflecting that the warm weather would soon open, while I had now spent four years in wandering in the countries on either side of the Indus, my attention became directed to my future course, and I decided upon gaining the port of Karáchí, and thence to make my way, in the best manner I could, into Persia. I therefore passed down the river to Tátta, touching at, on the western bank, the Baloch village of Ráhmat, and on the eastern, that of Alma-di-Got. At the latter place a serious dispute, I knew not on what

account, arose between our boatmen and the villagers. Stones and sticks were freely used, and swords were drawn, but fatal consequences were averted by our cutting our ropes, and falling down the stream.

Tátta lies some four miles from the river; it is in decay, but has abundant vestiges of former celebrity. To the west are elevations, crowned with a multitude of tombs. Some of these, constructed of yellow stone, curiously carved, are more than usually handsome, particularly that of Mírza Isâ, Túrkolâní, who, in rebellion against the Súbahdár of Múltân, called in the aid of the Portuguese. They afforded it, and subsequently sacked the city themselves, about 1555, A.D., from which date it has probably declined. It is advantageously situated in a country naturally productive, and is complaisantly spoken of by the natives of Sind, particularly by the Hindús; though, during its recent occupation by British troops, the mortality amongst them would seem to belie its reputation for salubrity. It is said, the town has seriously suffered during the last fifteen years, when its cotton fabrics gave way before the superior British manufactures. It yet makes lúnghís, and shawls of mixed silk and cotton, which are esteemed. The bazar is tolerable, and provisions reasonable; its gardens are numerous, producing mangoes and ordinary eastern fruits in some quantity, with small apples.

From Tátta to Karáchí the road leads over the

elevations to the west, which gradually subside into the level country; and a course of three or four cosses from them leads to Gújar, a small bazar town, with pools, or deposits, of rain-water. Hence, a generally sterile, and somewhat sandy tract, is passed to the Júkía town of Gárrah, seated on a salt-water creek. A little before reaching it there are large deposits of rain-water, just to the left of the road, and between them and the town are rocks full of imbedded fossil-shells. The salt-water creek of Gárrah has a communication with Karáchí, and I found three dúnghís, or small vessels, lying in it. A dreary sandy tract continues to Karáchí, the road, tolerably good, passing over a level surface; but there are no villages, and a very few Baloch hamlets of huts. Water is found in wells at particular spots, where the Hindús of Karáchí have erected buildings for the convenience of their kâfilas, and of travellers, called landís. The four or five cosses preceding Karáchí are somewhat troublesome from sand.

I walked alone from Tátta to Karáchí, and armed with a sword, which accident had thrown in my way at Haidarabád. I had seldom travelled with a weapon, and think the solitary traveller is much better without one. In this journey, on several occasions, I was obliged to put my hand on my sword, when, without it, I might probably have passed without so much notice. At a hamlet between Gárrah and Karáchí the people, I dare

say being afraid of me, disliked my passing the night amongst them, when I joined an opium kâfila, *en route* to Karáchi, from Pâlí in Márwâr, and went on with it without sleeping. On the road one of the armed attendants grew suspicious of me, and, under cover of his shield, approached in a menacing attitude. I know not what might have happened had not some of his associates interposed. The next morning we reached Karáchí, where I had the great satisfaction to behold the sea, a sight which I had not enjoyed for many years.

Karáchí, although not a large town, has much trade; it is surrounded with dilapidated mud walls, provided with towers, on which a few crazy guns are mounted. The suburbs, extensive, and generally comprising huts, are inhabited by fishermen and mariners. The port has one hundred vessels, of all sizes and descriptions, belonging to it, and its dúnghís venture to Dáman, Bombay, and Cálícat, also to Gwâdar and Maskát. The harbour is commodious for small craft, and is spacious, extending about two miles inwards, at which distance, from its mouth, the town is seated. On a high hill, or eminence, overlooking the entrance to the harbour on the left hand, as it is approached from the sea, is the fort or castle of Manároh, garrisoned by a small party of Júkíás; it is said, there are many guns in it, but it is unexplained who are to work them. The eminence slopes to the beach, on